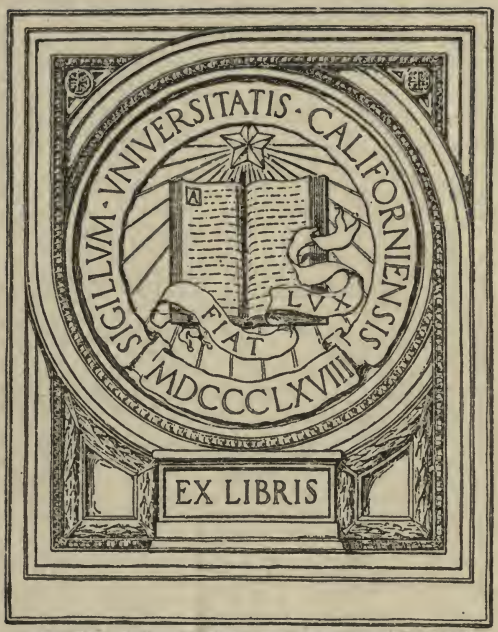
Wayside Experiences

By C. ELTON BLANCHARD, M. D.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Wayside Experiences

A Collection of Plain Tales as Heard Along the Road

BY

C. ELTON BLANCHARD, M. D.

Author of, "The Letters of Dr. Betterman," "Medical Dollars and Sense," "The Nut Cracker and Other Human Ape Fables," etc. etc.

"We are no other than a moving row
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go
Round with the Sun-illumined Lantern held
In Midnight by the Master of the Show;

But helpless Pieces of the Game He plays
Upon this Chequer-board of Nights and Days;
Hither and thither moves, and checks, and slays,
And one by one back in the Closet lays."
—Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.

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By C. E. BLANCHARD

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PREFACE.

It is an age of plain speaking. When any good purpose is to be served it is well to call a spade by its right name. The ancient and pseudo-respectable prudery is giving place to an earnest and intelligent desire to know more of the physical meaning of life. While teachers and preachers have been busy with the fine points of morals and ethics, the terrible scourge of venereal disease has been stealing into our homes, like a thief in the night, destroying innocent victims by thousands.

Fiction writers have assumed or been allowed all manner of freedom in our current literature, even of the better class, so called, in dealing with suggestive situations, and illicit sex complications are boldly described, but any fair and truthful exposition of real dangers, even though presented in proper, though plain language, has been tabooed. The cry of the child, until recently, has not been heard—the cry that demanded the right to be well born, of clean and healthy parents; the call of the unborn to be given a fair chance, to have used in its behalf the best that science and progress could offer, all this has been until recently ignored.

Now, a new era is dawning. We will teach all these things, these eugenic things, in our schools, in our fiction and in other literature read by the common people, and eventually a general knowledge along these lines will crystallize a strong public opinion into Law

and that designed to protect the innocent and exclude all menace to health and happiness from home life.

These stories may be premature. They may be timely or untimely; they may be good or bad fiction as judged by the usual standards of literary criticism. They have at least one merit none can deny to them: sincerity and reality, for they are bits of real life gathered from the writer's diversified experiences. Let them serve you if they may, to some good end.

C. ELTON BLANCHARD.

Youngstown, Ohio, March, 1913.

THE PROLOGUE.

I had a vision of life as a great Highway, and along this the human race was traveling—a multitude of hustling, jostling creatures, each earnestly intent upon his own progress, showing but little, if any, concern about the condition of others.

I was in the throng, but why I knew not, nor had I knowledge of how I got there. Of those passing near I asked, "Whither are we bound?" but none gave heed to offer a satisfactory answer. I only knew that we were traveling on and on.

Of others I sought what seemed for the moment a more reasonable inquiry, and I asked, "From whence came we?" and yet even to this fair question I had no answer—except the silence of ages.

And often and anon there came those who separated themselves from the pressing throng and fell by the Wayside. Each of these weary travelers carried a burden, some of one sort, some another, and this burden they called Experience.

They could not lay it down—they could not give it up. Though in telling of it, often they shed bitter tears, still they seemed to prize it with a weird kind of tenderness. Sometimes it seemed to me the more of sorrow this burden bore, the more the care-worn traveler cherished it.

So we passed on and on, out into the dim and distant shadows of the falling night, each hugging to himself his burden.

I carried mine—I could not carry yours.

Dr. Jones' Farm for Down and Outs.

I never knew when or why we began calling him "Sire." It was away back there, at least thirty years ago that we met—Benjamin Jones and I. He was a student at the Harvard Medical School and I, a sub-editor on the old **Arena** magazine that homed about Copley Square. We both roomed around on St. Botolph St., and ate our meals at Mrs. Avery's dining room for students.

Even in those days Ben Jones was a quiet, thoughtful chap, widely read and ready to talk on any subject, if one could get him alone. He had little to say among people and many thought him very reserved. In the women with whom we came into contact he had no interest whatever. I doubt if more than two or three of all the students at the school ever came to know him and to appreciate the greatness of his mind and character.

On Sunday it was our custom to take long walks—Ben and I—historical jaunts, we used to call them. We tramped to all the old places of interest—visited the shrines at Cambridge, Bunker Hill, Salem, and once, on a three days trip, we went as far as Plymouth looking for the rock. Our favorite walk was out to Schoolmaster's Hill, Franklin Park, Roxbury way, and there under the scrubby pines we would

sit by the hour, talking of life and things. We tried to imagine we sat on the very spot where Emerson the schoolmaster, used to sit, dreaming his dreams of the philosophy of life. It was there I think, I first called him "Sire," because I said, he had become my mental father. However it may have happened, it matters little, yet during all these years Dr. Jones has been "Sire" to me. We have met but once since the days in Boston, but we have kept up a peculiar and wonderful correspondence. In one of his letters he said, "I'd rather be called Sire than king. I'd rather be father and brother to those I meet in this life, than the ruler of a kingdom, great or small." Dr. Benj. Jones is the ruler of a wonderful little kingdom now, all his own.

When the college days were over Ben Jones, M.D., went back to Ohio, and settled in a large industrial town, while I was soon drawn into the maelstrom of New York publishing life. There I ground out copy at one desk and another, but never at a desk of my own. Often I have had large salaries, but most of the money they paid me got away again, and now at fifty I am rich only in experience. I am old for my years, gray and bald—about six months to a year from the poor-house at any given time. At times I feel completely down and out, mentally and physically. New York is a great place to feed a man up with a good salary then work him to death. The salary they take away again for board and clothes, and when

he is worn down to the old plug or has-been class, they turn him loose in the back pasture to graze or die, just as he chooses. There is a new grist of young men coming to the hopper each year. No room for Down-and-Outs in New York.

Not long ago I had a letter from "Sire" telling me about his farm—"Dr. Jones' Health Farm" he calls it—and inviting me to come for a stay, long or short, just as my pleasure dictated. For months I had been dragging down to my work, doing my daily grind on pure nerve force—feeling in every cell of my body and brain the call for rest—rest even if the grave had to open to give it. How rest came I cared little. When I got this letter about the farm, I made my plans to go. I told them at the office if I did not come back they need not wonder.

My journey out to Ohio, neither interested me nor will it interest you. Somehow I got to the little station and "Sire" was there waiting for me. For a moment he clasped me by the shoulders, looking me squarely in the face.

"Well, you needed to come. I can see that."

"I guess I did, Sire," I replied.

"It does beat all how the city wears 'em out," leading me toward the auto-bus waiting for us.

We rode down through the village but at the outskirts, he dismissed the conveyance, and we got down to walk.

"It's only a mile or so from here. We used to walk and we can now I am sure. As we go along, I will tell you about the farm."

Walking and talking, we presently came out through the fields, for which the road had been deserted, to a sloping hillside and looking down into the valley we could see the farm buildings among the trees.

"There it is," said the doctor. "Six years ago I left the city to retire after twenty-five years of practice and came back to this little valley. It was my cradle and it will be my grave. I had saved a few thousand dollars—enough to keep me the rest of my days I thought. I had the old place from the estate of my father —not all the land we have now, but enough for a retired doctor. This home had been in our family for many years. It was my great grandfather, Benjamin Jones, after whom I was named, who came with the early New England emigration to the Western Reserve. I have often heard my grandfather tell of those times. There in the woods along the river they settled, built the log cabins and worked to clear up the land for you and me, though they thought they were working for themselves no doubt.

"I did not do much the first Summer. We had a garden and some crops. I also started my root beds. I say we, but the only family I had at first was Wong How, the same Chinese cook, we still have. We have never had any women folks at the farm, not that I have

any notions against them, but being alone myself, I thought best to continue living as I had done in town."

I knew the doctor had never married and I often wondered why, for I remembered something about a sweetheart back in the college days. He had never offered to tell me, and I felt unwilling to ask outright. Once I hinted in a letter about it, but to this he made no reply.

"May be Jack will be wiser than I have been," he said presently, with a smile, "and bring home a wife some day."

"Who is Jack?" I asked.

"That is so, I never wrote you of the boy. Well, it's a long story for some night under the trees. You must wait—just now I am telling you about the farm. Wong How and I came in the early Spring. In spite of the work, and there was plenty of it to do, by June I was lonesome, so I invited a friend of mine to come out from the city. He is the director of charities there. We had a good time, and when he went home, I asked him to send out six boys, from ten to fifteen years of age, who might be benefitted by a month's stay in the country. The bargain was that I should teach them to work in return for their keep, as we put it. The boys came and we had a glorious time. After a month I sent them home and a new set came out. With the second lot came the director again, and with him two grownups, friends he had interested. We went

swimming in the river, and fishing too. The hay was ready to cut, so the boys, old and young, pitched in and helped me put it up. We had a royal good time and the good it did those fellows, suggested the idea of extending the work, but I hesitated to undertake it.

"When the director and his two friends went home, they left me twenty-five dollars each, seventy-five dollars, they said, to help feed the boys. Well, I guess I had fifty different youngsters out here that Summer. Every one of them went home healthier and better boys than when they came. The men who came with them often lingered a few days, and I could see the good it did every one of them. My friend the director, wrote up the story for the city papers and gave me quite a send off. People began to write about coming. Nearly all the first Winter I had from one to a half dozen men with me. We cut wood, put up ice and made plans for the next Summer.

"At first, I had no idea of such an institution as we now have. I had no fixed charges and no thought of profit. The folks in town asked me to estimate the cost of keeping the boys, per day, with their work contributed. I could not do it, so we settled on the rate of fifty cents a day for each boy. The grownups that came set their own price and left me at the rate of two dollars a day. This custom has become the rule of the institution. I never make out any bills, but we keep a register that shows the names and dates of arrival. So far

no one has forgotten to leave the money before he goes and some have left or sent substantial sums for the promotion of our plans. A few have come along that we found it necessary to hand a schedule of the trains that leave the village, because we could do them no good.

"Besides the money, our big boys have contributed labor according to their ability, and each man received from the farm what he needed. The second Summer we had with us Nate Coleman, and it is to his skill and enthusiastic interest that we owe most of the improvements on the farm. He was a down and outer from drink, but no better architect and engineer ever lived. Besides his mechanical ability he was an artist of rare taste. When you get down there, you will see the wall and the big gates and the new buildings, all built of field stone —nigger heads, people about here call them— laid in cement. We did not have enough stone about the place, but farmers near by brought us thousands of loads. We paid them one dollar a load.

"It was Nate who projected the dam in the river. It is made of reinforced concrete and lifts the surface about five feet, giving us a nice body of water at all times for boating, fishing and bathing. In Winter it holds the water better for the ice crop, and we have great fun skating, besides. The overflow from the dam runs our hydraulic rams, that work while we sleep, keeping our water tanks full all the time. We have always plenty of water, so the lawns,

gardens and flower beds never suffer for want of it. All this came along so fast, I had to dip into my savings account a few thousand dollars. I did not mind that, for I began to see I would not need the money for myself.

"How the boys did work, helping the masons on the wall. They wheeled dirt, pounded stone, shoveled sand, mixed cement and no paid workers could have shown more interest. Men with soft hands and with heads worth ten thousand dollars a year, tended mason, called themselves 'wops' and went to bed tired, to the table hungry, and home after a month or so of stay, feeling well and happy. They called it 'Dr. Jones' Work Cure' and it certainly is a specific for neurasthenia.

"Those that went home sent others and before the second Summer was over, we had to make plans for more house room. Nate had it up his sleeve all the time to build the Rectangle. You can see it now very well from here. It is just a big bungalow arranged about an open court, cement floored except the space in the center for the flowers and the pool for the fish. The boys call the rooms sleeping cells, but they are cozy and healthy. For each four cells is a sitting room, with a big fire place. There is a toilet and a wash room for each set of cells. The doors of the sitting rooms open on the court, and a porch with stone columns, runs about the three sides of the Rectangle level with the court. There are now forty-eight beds in the building, but in Summer when we

are crowded we put up cots in the court, and some sleep in tents about.

"Behind the Rectangle, but connected by a covered passage is the Bath House. It has a number of small compartments with modern plumbing. In the center is the plungepool, made of porcelained brick, laid in cement. We use this swimming pool only in Winter, as a rule, though a few 'tenderfoots' prefer it to the river plunge, at first, but they soon get in the procession.

"By the end of the third year the director had induced the city to establish a municipal farm school for boys nearer to town, so after that we had no more youngsters. I am called one of the Board for the boys' farm school and some of my boys are there as teachers and out door instructors. It is a grand idea. I was pleased with this change, for it was necessary to provide for about five hundred boys and this was too much for an old man like me.

"When I cast up my accounts at the end of the third year, I found we had invested over twenty-five thousand dollars in the improvements, besides paying all expenses and salaries. Ten thousand of this had come out of my old age fund. By this time I had made up my mind that I would not have any old age. I had come out here to retire, but instead I found I had really taken on a new life job. The best of it was, I did not care whether we made any profit or not. The people came, worked and created. We had much of the material at hand,

and with Nate's gray matter, we have made a very beautiful property. Of course it's mine, but that don't mean anything, any more than the air or sunshine is mine.

"Up to this time the old house had been my quarters, and it was good enough, and is still good enough for me. It had also been the cooking department and the dining room, as well as quarters for the help. Wong How often had quite a number of his countrymen with him. I do not know why we drifted into this way of hiring Chinese help. It seemed to be satisfactory, and while we try to teach the dignity and worth of any kind of labor, it may have saved us a good deal of trouble. Wong How and his boys do their work in the kitchen and laundry faithfully and well. We can depend upon them. They are clean and orderly. I have had Wong How so long he seems a part of my life. Perhaps he is serving his purpose, just as I am serving mine or you, yours. The fourth Summer, Nate built the Food House, as the boys call it."

We were now approaching the main entrance to the farm and the doctor's narrative continued.

"You can see this building to the right of the Rectangle. The bungalow idea is carried out with it. We have plenty of ground space here, and except in the old house, there are no stairs on the farm. The big room has a small stage and we have just set up a new piano there. Some of the folks thought the old one

was not good enough for us. It makes a dining room, theatre, church, dancing hall, council chamber, all combined. Behind the big room is the bakery and kitchen. The ovens are in the basement, also the store rooms for supplies, provisions, etc. We have a cold storage over there by the river bank. This is our feeding plant. It supplies food for the body and sometimes food for the soul.

"This year we had what we called our 'Haying Time Musical.' The boys sent out their invitations to wives, sisters and sweethearts—also to a few mothers. They came, we saw them, but they conquered us! Well, we had some great music. There were some professionals among the performers and it was quite a treat to many of the people living about here, all of whom were invited. You will notice those low windows slide, and when opened a large number on the outside saw and heard about as well as those on the inside. The estimated number was one thousand persons, which was quite a crowd for a rural corner like this.

"In this room we have our Sunday lectures—some times I talk when we can find no one with a better message. Now and then we have theatricals and dancing when ladies visit us. The Food House has been a good investment. I raised nearly enough golden seal root over there in the grove that season, to pay for it. I had about one thousand pounds of the dried root and I got five dollars a pound for

it. You should have seen some of my farmer neighbors open their eyes, when my first five thousand dollar load, ten barrels with one hundred pounds to the barrel, went to the station. I am going into this drug plant raising more extensively. We will market about a ton of the golden seal this season, if nothing happens, and a like quantity of echinacea also, which brings about three dollars a pound. Golden seal is now six fifty a pound on druggist lists.

"Well, here we are and I have done all the talking so far. You shall have your chance later."

We turned into the big stone pillared gateway and under the main arch I read this sign:

DR. JONES' HEALTH FARM.

I had no sooner washed and rested a few minutes in one of the "cells" assigned me, than the supper bell rang. The good old "Sire" was waiting at my door to escort me to my seat at his table. I must stand while he made a little speech, telling who I was and what I was to him. His smooth face wreathed in smiles—the merry blue eyes beaming—all this spoke plainly his happiness to have me with him. Dr. Benjamin Jones was an old man then; his mane of hair fell backward over his head as white as snow, but he had all the life and spirit of the youngest in that roomful—forty odd as I counted.

As the meal proceeded, we talked. To the others at the table he said, "I shall leave it to my friend here to select his own labors, but if he should chance to join the wood choppers tomorrow you must be easy on him, boys. His hands are soft."

"Yes, oh, yes, we'll be easy on him," said some of the fellows laughing at my discomfort.

The food came on, substantial but plain. There was corn bread and butter, soft boiled eggs and baked potatoes. At each plate stood a good sized dish of maple syrup, made on the farm and how well it went with the corn bread. There was milk, tea, coffee, water—take your choice. Mine was milk—Jersey milk the doctor explained.

"We keep a dairy now of ten cows, but I must add a few more, I fear, the way these boys drink milk and eat butter. I tell them they must have been bottle-fed babies."

My walk seemed to bring my appetite and I surprised myself the way I went after that corn bread and syrup.

"You'll do better after they break you in tomorrow," the doctor commented.

Just where the big trees end by the river bank, a bluff, thirty or forty feet above the water, is formed. The great wall encircles the trees at the end, forming an outlook over the swimming pool. From this circle the steps lead down to the platform at the edge of the water or "swimming hole" as they called it. The

men called this circular court under the trees, "Council Bluff" and it was the custom for those who had no other work or self appointed task, to gather here at the evening hour, to smoke, talk and listen. It was here the old doctor came closest to his friends. They always saved his seat near the end of the wall, by the steps. It was a little higher there and from this place he pronounced his "sermons" on life and things. Here many men were born again into a new conception of life's meaning.

We gathered after supper in this council place under the trees and as the twilight deepened, they cast their kindly shadows over the faces of the group. We talked each with his neighbor as we smoked. After a time, the old doctor finished his pipe, and looked from face to face. They seemed to know what was coming and a silence fell as we waited on his words. The sound of rippling water at the dam came to our ears. Crickets were calling in the grass. Across the distant meadow we heard faintly the lowing of a cow. The cooling dew was falling. A mist arose over the river like some weird phantom of the night.

Then the doctor began to talk. He spoke very slowly and with great tenderness. It was a long sermon in a few words. It made us wonder why we had so long forgotten the real meaning of life. We felt very close to Nature and to God, as we sat there in the shadows listening to his words. The dear old philosopher spoke but a few minutes, yet we seemed to have

lived again our whole life time. At last he said, "Boys, let's have a song now. Let's sing again that old hymn, 'Lead Kindly Light.' Everybody knows it."

There were twenty or more of us in the group that night, of all ages from early manhood to life's decline. There were some very good singers among these men and when the old song arose and the sweet melody of men's voices filled the night air it aroused in me a wonderful emotion. They had evidently sung the song together before for they sang exceedingly well.

"Lead kindly light amid the encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on:
The night is dark and I am far from home."

Three verses they sang and I am sure my tears were not the only ones to be hastily brushed away, at least among the newcomers. The song ended, and its faint echoes came from over the river. The night so still, told us of peace and rest.

"Well, boys, let's go to our beds," the doctor said quietly.

One by one we made off to our rooms. On the way from "Council Bluff" the old doctor slipped his arm through mine and said, "Well, dear boy, do you think you'll like the farm?"

"Sire, if it does for my body what it has already done for my mind, I shall never want to leave you."

He chuckled a little and pressed my arm tighter.

"Oh, they come and go. Many go and come back again. Some try it out there a while after this, and they don't like it," he said stretching his hand toward the star-lighted horizon.

We stood looking at the stars a few minutes before he continued.

"I am a very small man, and this is a very small world when we think of all God's outdoors in the sky. Still there are places and corners where peace dwells, if people only keep working and singing their songs. I can't let our farm become chronic with any man. When he comes back too often, I send him out somewhere to start one of his own. There are several here and there that call us the 'Mother Farm' like the Mother Church we used to visit sometimes in Boston. The mother idea is all right if we can't agree with the rest."

Then we went to our beds. As I lay there in my tidy little room, with the night air coming in at my window so clean and sweet with the smell of many herbs and bloom, the stillness seemed to keep me awake. A whip-poor-will was calling his mate somewhere in the grove, and but for it the silence might have seemed oppressive.

I must have slept, for I awoke when the soft tones of the morning bell rang out the call for the "Bath Robe Parade" as the boys called it. Sire was knocking at my door.

"You will want to see the fun, so throw on this and come," he said, handing me a bath robe. Pulling on my slippers, I joined him. Down the walk went the procession of forty odd health seekers—monks they seemed, some with cowls pulled over—to the steps at "Council Bluff" and down the steps to the platform at the pool. Off went the bath robes, and men as naked as God made them—except for bathing trunks—plunged into the deep cold water of the river. Such a splashing and confusion of legs and arms I never saw.

"We use the pool here till the first frost comes in the Fall, then we go to the Bath House pool," the doctor explained.

They did not stay in the water but a few minutes. Out they came, laughing, puffing and happy. On went the robes and one by one they trotted back to their cells.

"Tomorrow, I'll take mine too," I said.

By the time the bathers had rubbed down and dressed the bell for breakfast sounded. The sun was just coming up in the East and through the window at our table, I could see the red and the gold that promised a good day.

There were ten of us in the wood chopping "gang." Sire took an equal number to the grove to work among the roots, while others went to the gardens and fields. There were four "professional lawn tenders" who looked after the grass and flowers. The woodmen and field workers went under the direction of

farmer foremen in the doctor's employ, and these men taught us to work successfully at the task in hand.

Everywhere was order and system. Everything in trim and neatness. While about such a farm there always accumulates a great amount of odds and ends, there was a place for everything, nothing wasted, neglected or thrown at random.

In the closets off our cells we found our suits of overalls and jacket—"jumpers" some called them—also rubber boots and brogans for wet or dry weather. The footwear was usually big enough to fit, but if not suited, there was an assortment in the storeroom. The foreman had ten keen edged axes ready for us. These we shouldered and marched off like soldiers to the war.

In the group were some men who held high positions, when classed by the dollars and cents they commanded. One lawyer had fees, it was known, that often reached fifty thousand a year. There was a banker or two and a captain of industry. They all took orders from a twenty-five dollar a month farm foreman.

It seemed that while a natural gas well supplied light and fuel for the Food House and Bath House, they used wood in the fire places and in the steam heating plant. It was this wood we were helping to prepare. We went to a wood lot, where many second growth and undesirable trees were to be cleared away, both for the fuel and to improve the land for pas-

ture. These trees varied from three to ten inches in diameter. Most of the choppers were new to the work so the foreman showed us how it was done. With rapid and accurate blows he soon made the chips fly, and presently the tree, a good sized one, lay upon the ground.

"Looks easy enough," the banker commented.

"I'll be all right if I can hit more than once in the same place," ventured the lawyer.

So with many jokes and much banter we began learning the woodman's art. We were divided into pairs and set at work with safe distance between each set of workers. I was paired off with the lawyer and we waded into a good sized tree that had been marked for us. We hacked away, one resting while the other worked. Now and then some fellow from another set would call out to us. One said, "I could gnaw it off quicker than that."

"I don't doubt it," called back the lawyer, "always thought you were part dog or beaver or some sort of rodent."

Thus we laughed and worked, also sweated at our tasks. Our tree fell at last and we shouted like schoolboys. Then we forged ahead on the limbs and the cutting of the trunk into proper lengths. When the poles we had cut were piled, also the brush laid in heaps, we could hardly realize we had been at work four hours. The old bell was calling us to wash and dress for dinner.

I do not think our whole company of ten men did as much work, no, I won't say work, for we worked hard enough—I'll say, cut as much wood as two skilled woodmen would have done, but we went home tired, hungry and happy. It was a luxury—the sponge bath and the rub down. How good our natural clothing felt, and how we did eat!

The afternoons on the farm are spent as each man's pleasure dictates. Some went up the river fishing. Others took walks over the hills. Others still read or wrote letters or chatted in the shade. Some of the more interested ones of the gardens or the flower beds, studied their plants and consulted books from the library, and the doctor had a large collection by this time.

Sire and I took a walk to see his golden seal beds in the grove, where by following the plan of nature he was producing a root that excelled anything the drug makers had ever seen, he said. It was out in the grove by the golden seal beds he told me the story of Jack.

"You will remember back there in the Boston days I once told you of Nan. We had been schoolmates, and when I went away to medical college she had promised to be my wife. It seemed a long time to wait I suppose. It seemed long to me, still not too long for the girl I loved. It must have seemed too long for Nan, for before I left you in Boston, she wrote breaking her engagement. I could not blame her much, yet I loved her dearly and

what she did greatly depressed me for a time. I could not speak of it to anybody—not even to you. She took what she thought was a better chance, a man I never knew, but everyone said she had done well to marry John Fobes, a Chicago banker's son. A few said it was better than to wait for Ben Jones, a struggling young doctor. I have never disputed them in this, still I have waited to see the end of the story.

"Fobes took his wife, my Nan, and went to Chicago, where he had originated. There he soon became a successful banker and politician. He belonged to that set of grafters that made Chicago its happy hunting ground those years. I never knew the whole story but I read of his arrest for some sort of peculation and he went to prison for a long term of years. He died suddenly soon after his term began, and Nan came home to her folks with her little boy. I saw her here, and the child and I soon became great friends. I loved the lad, but when I saw the change that had come over his mother in those years of her married life, I was glad I had not married her. Maybe she would not have changed this way had she married me, who knows. I saw considerable of them that Summer, and I advised her to put the boy in school. She had saved a little money from the wreck of Fobes' estate so she was rather independent that way. She followed my suggestion and sent the boy away to school, but

she did this, I thought, because it left her more freedom to follow her own fancy.

"Her father died that Winter, and her mother went to live with the older son. After that I heard no more of Nan, except as reports of her notorious conduct about racing and watering places, drifted back to us. When the boy was twelve I became his guardian. I never knew how it happened but it had been his mother's wish. She was either murdered or committed suicide, while living as the mistress of a well known race track gambler. Poor Nan, how I have wished since then she had waited and never changed," and the old man sat silent a moment or two.

"I brought the boy back to Ohio and put him in school in town and he lived with me and Wong How. I have been father and mother to him ever since. He is now twenty-five and gets his M.D. in June from John Hopkins. There was a little money left for Jack and I have helped him some. Better still, he has helped himself. I tried to teach him what a dollar costs by earning one for himself. He is a practical chap, and I hope he lives to take my place here."

The doctor then fussed about among the roots a while. I knew if he had anything more to say, he would say it in his own time.

"Perhaps it is better so," he said softly. "Fate seems to arrange our plans for us and all we can do is to follow the path marked out. Man proposes but God disposes, they say. How-

ever, every man needs a woman to smooth his brow. I prescribe it, but somehow I could not forget Nan—Nan as she used to be—as she might have been to me. Now I've got Nan's boy."

I couldn't think of anything good to say, so I said nothing and once more we sat in silence a long time. By and by, I said, "I understand, Sire, I do."

"I knew you would—I wanted to tell you. No one else knows. Let it be so. Shall we trot back now? It's almost supper time."

That night under the trees, when we came to the place for the "talk," the doctor said, "I've had some thoughts today about how every man pays the price. Do you want to hear them?"

We could not see his face very well, but I am sure he looked at me and smiled.

"Hear! hear!" we cried. This was the custom at the beginning of each of the doctor's talks.

"Every man pays his price. Nature or God, call it what you will, puts it on the ticket, marked in plain figures,—one price to all. You and I must pay—that's all there is to it.

"Because brain labor is the better money getter, and seems more desirable, men have counted toil with hands as degraded. The men and women of ease grow fat and the vital organs degenerate. The heart falters and fails.

The arteries harden and break. Presently a great hulk of corruption is carted off to the dead. He was a great banker, statesman, captain of industry, a judge on the bench, or what not, but he did no physical work. He left a huge fortune perhaps that others had produced. He left a family tainted with his own fatal heredity. He paid the price.

"By devious and subtle ways, by systems of great cunning, by the formulation of law and by the interpretation of this law, men have succeeded wonderfully in the exploitation of the toiler: like the horse the worker has been dumb. His interest centered about his feed box. So long as it was full he was content. Fatigue made intelligence difficult, and the worker did not know his strength or the value of his labor in production.

"By the subtle devices called profits, tariffs, rents, rebates, interest, bonds, stocks and franchises, by patents, secret formula and by all the other hidden systems, often made legal by political subalterns and substantiated by subjugated courts, the products of labor have been taken from the producer and given to the exploiter. The scorner of honest toil has gloated over his millions and his hundreds of millions. These billions have been garnered into Wall Street where the wolves of finance tear and rend each other for supremacy—for possession of this stolen wealth—I say stolen, but of course taken according to the laws of the looting system, yet in the last analysis as

wrongly taken as the loot of the bank vault robber or the highwayman.

"And what is the price we pay for all this? It is poverty. Poverty that breeds crime and disease. It builds hovels and jails, workhouses and poorhouses, hospitals and insane asylums, dives and brothels. It sends millions of innocent babes to premature graves. It drives a horde of fair women to the harlot's bed. It wears out the toilers before their time and throws them on the scrap heap. Behold in the picture of our present industrial struggle the price we pay for millionaires. Behold the system of profit seeking competition, toppling over upon itself, because of its own rottenness. The rich are equally as ignorant of the causes of our social diseases as are the poor victims. Here and there men of wealth make desperate effort to check the fall—the crisis, that is upon us, by charities, hospitals, foundations, libraries, pseudo-profit sharing, workingmen's benefit associations and a hundred other futile make shifts. Preachers of the gospel of Jesus, cry out 'Repent and be saved' and all the while the church is as diseased as society itself. Doctors rush here and there night and day to cure sickness that never should have occurred. Hospitals are filled with thousands of injured and undertakers are busy with the killed, all of whom need not have suffered and died had industry been put upon the right basis. Lawyers are pleading cases and judges deciding entanglements that should not have occurred but

for poverty and the fear of poverty. Officers of the Law go chasing poor victims who listened to Brute Force which said, 'do and dare, take and revolt.' Policemen, as dull as the tough in their hands, try to beat the idea of submission into the heads of the rebellious, with their night sticks. Isn't it all a woeful price to pay?

"What shall a man do to be saved? Men of wealth are often men of great personal worth. What can they do? Here and there they follow the advise of Jesus, 'Sell all and give to the poor' but it is futile. It is but a drop in the bucket, that adds only to the misery of the whole and leaves the giver no better off.

"Brothers, there is only one solution, only one way to escape from all this terrible price we pay. We must abolish poverty. To do this we must give up profits and competition. We must come down to earth and be willing to perform whatever labor of hands Nature has imposed upon us."

I cannot reproduce all this talk. He tried to make us understand his definition of labor. He illustrated the classification of toil. He gave us glimpses of a society without poverty, but he added that none present would live to see it fully established. He said each must solve his own problem of adjustment, and not be embittered. For himself, he had by hard labor and economy in his life as a doctor, saved a little money and come out there to end his

days in peace. Now the turn of affairs had created there a valuable property to which he held the title. It was not his property however. He had no personal use for it. He had arranged that when he went away on the long journey, it would continue in the way it had begun, serving men. If all men thought as he, and had no fear of poverty for themselves or their children, then this desire to hold property would be taken out of human life. It is a vain desire and its costs such a price, the race cannot afford it. The cost of poverty is too great. Let us abolish poverty.

I have been at the farm now two months. I am a well man again. I eat and sleep like a boy of twenty. I am going back to my desk but I shall come again. Dear old Sire says I must come every Summer, as we have but a few more to spend together.

I am going back into the struggle, but it won't be the same as before. I can laugh at it now, for I know it means nothing. If I can help others to recognize its insincerity and futility that will be part of my excuse for living. If the Thing tries to get me down again and to crush me into mental and physical misery, I will laugh at it. Pooh, I will say, I fear you not. Out in Ohio there is a real place to live called Dr. Jones' Health Farm, and the good old Sire is waiting there to welcome me any day. He will welcome you too, my reader, if you need what the farm can do for you.

The Price He Paid.

"Well, don't that beat the devil?"

This was Dr. Xury's exclamation, when the nurse brought the baby, all washed and dressed, into the doctors' lounging room at the hospital. It was a fat clean-skinned child, and its lusty cry was ample evidence of good health.

"It certainly is a sweet child," the nurse said as she carried it away to the waiting mother.

Dr. Xury Taylor Lane was known by everybody connected with the hospital as "Dr. Xury." He was old enough to have been ripened by experience, yet young enough to appreciate that saving sense of humor. To fit this prescription a man usually has to be somewhere around forty. Had Dr. Lane been asked he would have confessed forty at least. He was a sharp, keen-eyed man, reasonably bald, he said from early piety, but erect and muscular, his very manner suggesting power and sincerity. Yet there was always a pleasant smile, partly hidden by a close cropped moustache. There is little need, however, to dwell long upon Dr. Lane for he is not the star actor in our story. This will do as a formal introduction. You will learn to know him by what he says and does, just as I came to know him.

"What was it about that baby that beats the devil, Dr. Xury?" the house surgeon asked, after the nurse had left the room.

"The mother and father of that child are both under my care and treatment for constitutional syphilis. Now comes a clean healthy baby. Don't that beat the devil?"

"Not necessarily," the younger doctor replied. "It only shows what medicine will do."

"Well, we won't boast too soon. Give the child three years, then if nothing shows up, we will hurrah. Meantime we'll be just waiting—only waiting!" and Dr. Xury went down the long hall toward his waiting machine, humming a tune.

For some time before the opening of our story, Mr. Harry B. Van Auker had been a successful illustrator and artist. He had a studio in connection with a large engraving establishment. His drawing was good and therefore in demand. His work was original and clever. Several vacation times he had spent in travel, and he did some work in water color and oil. One Summer he went to Europe and spent a few happy weeks in Holland where the tradition says his family originated.

Harry is an interesting fellow—calm, easy in manner and slow of words, but with that drawl sort of humor and wit most of us enjoy so well. It is not to be wondered at that Marion Sturdevant learned to love him. They had been engaged about six months when Harry first went to Dr. Lane. They planned to be

married the next June and spend the Summer about the Irish coast sketching. Marion was something of a water color enthusiast. In fact I believe they had met at the Art Club. Harry had already sold a few of his Dutch scenes for fair prices, so they thought it might be a profitable way to spend the honeymoon. You can understand how they looked forward to this trip, especially when you remember this was to be a wedding journey.

During October Harry went to Dr. Lane about some sores in his mouth. He had tried throat lozenges, mouth wash tablets, etc. recommended by the druggists, but nothing seemed to help him. Like many others, Harry would not think of consulting a physician so long as the druggist would sell him "something good for what ailed him." Doctors always get a big bill against you someway, if you once fall into their hands. This was Harry's idea—like many other folks— because he put the service of a physician on the same basis as that of the drug store clerk who sold him something good for mouth sores, price 25 cents.

Luckily Harry thought well of Dr. Xury and when the mouth kept on getting worse, he went to the doctor's office.

"I want you to examine my mouth," said Harry.

"All right, son, sit here," and Dr. Lane placed his patient, fixing his head lamp into place.

"Well, by jinks,—mucous patches!"

"What do you mean by that?" asked the young man, somewhat alarmed.

"I mean the secondary sores of syphilis," with this remark the doctor began to feel for glands in the back of the neck, about the elbows and other places.

"I never had anything wrong with me," Harry protested.

"Not that you thought was anything, yet you did have something wrong with you, and you have got something very much wrong right now."

For a moment or two Harry sat looking at the doctor closely, as if to make out his meaning, then he said, "Now look here, Dr. Lane, if you are sure about this thing, it's a mighty serious matter, I can tell you that; you can't understand what it means to me."

"There are tests of the blood we can make, but it is not necessary. Your tongue and mouth show plain enough what the trouble is. Did you never have a sore of any kind?"

"Oh, about a year ago I had a little lump, but it did not hurt me any. I got some powder at the drug store and it soon went away."

"All right, I say you have got syphilis. Go to any one or a dozen doctors and see what they say. Then if you want me to treat you, come back."

"If I have this disease, can you cure me? Can you do it right away?"

"We have successful treatment for syphilis. The old way takes from one to three years. The new way is too new to say much about just yet. If what they are calling '606' does

what is claimed for it, it may save time, but I'll stick to the old way for the present."

"Doctor, you won't feel offended if I see one or two others, will you? I want to feel sure, you know."

"Not at all, son, not at all."

Two or three days later artist Harry called again on Dr. Lane. The doctor already knew about all the other physicians he had consulted, for almost without exception, they had, one by one, called him over the telephone, confirming his diagnosis.

"Well, you've been the rounds, have you?"

"Yes, doctor, I saw a few—they all agree for once. I guess you will have to treat me," the young man replied, with a sob in his voice. "I'm all broke up about this. I even thought of committing suicide."

"Nonsense, son! You do as I tell you and you'll get well all right. So they all agreed for once?"

"Yes, all but one. I called upon one doctor over here, who has 'Specialist' on his sign. I thought I'd see what he would say. He said I had pipe cancer—that I'd be dead inside a year, if not treated. He would cure me for one hundred dollars cash, or for twenty-five dollars a month for five months. He would guarantee a cure in five months."

"Well, why don't you go to him?"

"I did not like his line of talk. Anyway Dr. Lane is good enough for me."

So the treatment began. In a few weeks the mouth was well and Harry began to act and feel more like himself. Repeatedly the doctor explained the necessity of long continued treatment. He told him as forcibly as he knew how that he should not think of marriage, at least not for two or three years. For fear of making trouble Harry did not tell the doctor anything about his plans, his engagement to Marion or their wedding as set for the coming June. Winter went along with its round of work and social activity. Harry felt in excellent health himself—he could not be better he assured himself and friends. As the months went by, he saw the doctor but rarely. He had his prescription filled for medicine as he needed it, and when he did not go to the doctor, it saved a fee. There is no use of paying a doctor a dollar or two for just going and saying, "How do you do?" This is another strange idea Harry and many other people have, that is, an unwillingness to recognize a doctor's service. You pay the dentist and the barber for certain work, therefore, like these the doctor earns no fee unless he performs some physical task.

As often as he debated the matter with himself the less reason he could see for asking a delay in the marriage plans. In case he did ask, what honest excuse could he give, except the real one? He could not think of confessing to his future wife the nature of the disease which his own reckless conduct had

brought upon himself. Harry Van Auker knew that Marion was a good and pure girl and he loved her devotedly. Ever since she had come into his life, he had lived in the right way. He argued with his own conscience that he was like all the boys, only he had been unlucky in sowing his "few wild oats"—that was all, very unlucky.

He prayed that something might happen to delay the marriage. He kept faithfully to his medicine, saying to himself, "I am certainly all right by this time." Weeks went by and nothing happened. The fates seemed to smile upon the happy couple. Business was good, money for the trip was in the bank, and the week of the wedding day came along. Putting aside his worries by force of will the poor fellow entered into all the preparations as happy bridegrooms usually do. Not a cloud could be seen in their matrimonial sky.

The guests showered presents and good wishes upon them. Rice and old shoes strewed their pathway to the carriage at the gate. Good byes were said, and with bag and baggage they were off for the boat to take them to Europe.

Had Dr. Lane been present and heard that question the minister put, using the old form of ceremony, "Is there anyone here present who can say aught against uniting this twain in holy wedlock?" he could have cried out, "Yea, I forbid, because the groom is liable to communicate a terrible disease, liable to curse

his unborn children. In the name of humanity that has a right to be well born, I forbid this marriage."

But Dr. Lane was busy with his patients and knew nothing of the wedding. Had he known it, he would have said nothing. He might have cussed a little quietly to himself. He might have said, the time will come when it will require something more than two dollars to pay the preacher, to obtain a marriage license.

The honeymoon trip was a glorious happy Summer. They worked and played along the shore of the Irish sea. They visited all the points of interest, painted ruins, rocks and Irish peasants. They brought home a valuable collection of sketches, also many happy memories of their days spent in this interesting corner of the world.

October found them nicely settled again in a home of their own, and Marion was pregnant. It was as she wanted it. Her mother-heart leaped with joy when she felt the first motions of life. By Christmas time she had all the little baby things ready. It was such fun making them and arranging everything.

During January Dr. Lane had a call from Harry.

"Doctor," said he, "my wife has the same kind of sores in her mouth that I had in mine. You have no idea it's the same trouble have you?"

"Your wife! You don't mean to say you went and married after all I said to you, do you?" The doctor raved about and cussed as vigorously as a man in good church standing could without breaking a certain commandment.

Then the husband told his story. He pleaded for secrecy. It would kill him to lose the love and respect of his wife. Surely something could be done. What were doctors good for if they cannot cure people of things. The doctor should treat her as he had him. She need not know what it was. He did not care what it cost. Just name any price he pleased and he would pay it.

"That will do—that will do. Do you think I am a medical pirate that holds up the victim because he is at my mercy? The price will be just the usual price. Send your wife to me at once."

"Marion, you had better call on Dr. Lane about your throat. I told him about it the best I could, but he wants to see you. Better go down today." This was Harry Van Auker's instruction to his wife.

The doctor was very kind. His pity went out to this poor young woman, greater sympathy than he dared to show. He admitted she had quite a bad looking throat. He inquired if she ever had any kind of a sore anywhere else. She assured him that she never had. He gave her treatment and medicine himself, instead of writing a prescription, for after she had

told him her condition, he was determined to see the case through.

Marion's mouth got well promptly, as did her husband's, and she went along with usual good health, under the doctor's care up to the time the baby came. At the birth of the child neither father or mother showed any signs of the disease, and the mother had no suspicion whatever of such a thing. After Mamma Marion and the baby went home from the hospital, Dr. Xury heard little of them, except as he met Harry now and then on the street. Harry always said, "They're doing fine, Doc."

When the baby was about three months old Mrs. Van Auker called up the doctor saying, "Baby's hair is coming out. He is almost as bald as a little old man. What is the matter with him?"

"It will come in again. Give him time," the doctor replied. "Bring him down and let me see him if you don't think he is doing well."

A month later he had another call. "Baby is all broken out with a rash, a scaly rash all over his body. I want you to call and see him."

The doctor called. There lay the little chap, not a hair on his head and the whole body covered with a syphiloderm, the skin full of creases and wrinkles like old age. What could he say to that mother? What ought he to say? They had not called him sooner because they were using a blood purifier they

had bought at the drug store. What a crime it was for Harry Van Auker to marry this good woman, infect her with this dreadful disease and then bring into the world this poor little innocent babe to suffer and be cursed.

However the doctor left his medicine and instructions, outlined the care and treatment, and went away. Talking with his colleague, old Dr. Blunt, about it he urged the importance of marriage laws that would demand physical fitness.

"Oh, yes, I argued and published all that twenty-five years ago. I advocated laws demanding physical examination and a certificate of physical fitness before marriage license should be granted. I advocated the production of sterility in victims of tuberculosis, syphilis, epilepsy, insanity and habitual criminals and drunkards. Oh, I went after them rough shod! What do you think came of it?"

"What did come of it?" asked Dr. Lane.

"Nothing. People said I was an old crank. I wanted to let the doctors manage everything. Nobody could get born, or die without employing them, and now I wanted to fix it so nobody could get married without paying the doctors a fee."

"Yet, for all that, it will come," said Dr. Lane.

"Perhaps, every little holler helps. I made my holler twenty-five years ago. Now you make yours. Meantime hanging is too good for such a chap as this of yours."

"Be easy, doctor, be easy," laughed Dr. Xury, "ignorance causes a multitude of sins. People have been squemish so long about having the truths of life taught the general public that it is hard to work against this preju dice. Here and there light is breaking. I'll pull this family through yet, and meantime I guess the father is getting his pay all right."

The baby did splendidly under treatment. His skin cleaned up and the hair began to grow. Inside a few months he was a plump fat boy again, and once more happiness seemed at home in the Van Auker family circle. Both mother and father were kept on the medicine. They were in good health, but it had been decided there should be no more children.

When the child was about two he seemed to act strangely about his sight. He had been a little slow in walking but now that he did get about some on his feet, he seemed to be unable to make out the objects about him. He often stumbled over things, still the mother could not see anything wrong with his eyes. Weeks passed and the child grew worse instead of better. Without saying anything to Harry, Marion took the baby to an oculist of whom she had heard. He questioned her closely. The innocent mother talked freely of the baby's previous sickness and of her own.

"Who was your doctor?" the oculist asked.

"Dr. Lane."

"Dr. Xury?"

"Yes."

"All right, I'll talk with him. I'll say now though, I think your baby is going blind. I think he has a degeneration of the optic nerves. I do not think we can save his sight, but I will talk with Dr. Lane and you will hear from us right away."

The poor mother got home some way, she never knew how. She carried the child, hugged close to her heart, tears streaming down her face. She telephoned at once for Harry. When he arrived at the door, she cried, "Oh, Harry, Harry, baby is going blind. The doctor says so," and fell fainting at his feet.

There was a rush call for Dr. Lane, and as she lay recovering from her shock, she told him what the oculist had said. Then he examined the baby himself. After that he sat looking squarely at Harry Van Auker for several minutes.

Finally the doctor arose and said, "You better keep quiet a while, Mrs. Van Auker. I will see Dr. Anderson on my way home. He is the best man you can employ for the baby. He will save the sight if any one can—mind you, if **any one can.**"

In the hall, when they were out of hearing he said to Harry, "You better tell her everything, for she will find it out sooner or later. Better tell her yourself than let some one else."

Harry Van Auker said nothing, but stood pale and trembling as he watched the doctor going down the walk. Do those who believe

in a place of torment, think a better hell could be invented than that in which this poor husband now found himself? Do they feel willing to say that an All-Wise Providence had shown a justice when an innocent wife and a dear sweet babe had to be punished for the sins of another? Would any sort of torture or punishment of that husband and father set them free? It was to save just such innocent victims as these that old Dr. Blunt had wanted to put the regulation of marriage into competent medical hands. So far the public has preferred to let people take their own ignorant chances, then if trouble and sorrow came, some one offered the consolation, "marriage is all a lottery anyway."

That night Harry Van Auker paced the floor of his study. He could not sleep. He could not face his wife and tell her the truth. He could not see what it would accomplish if he told her. At times he prayed, as we poor humans often do when face to face with trouble we cannot overcome.

"My God, I cannot face her and live," he said to himself. Along about midnight he crept toward the bedroom where they slept. The little boy was sleeping in his crib-bed along side that of his parents'—the mother was also asleep, her hand stretched out clasping that of the child. Their breath came and went in the rythm of slumber. He looked at them for a moment and then went quietly down to the study again.

"Oh, how I wish we were all dead," sobbed the poor man as he resumed his struggle, pacing back and forth in his little study-den. At last he went to the desk, opened a drawer and took out the new automatic he had bought for burglars. Guns made and advertised for burglars are as often used for murder and suicide.

Yes, he would end it all. He laid the gun on the table before him and sat down to think. He thought of the past. He lived again the happy days on the Irish coast. He heard his wife's laughter as they romped like children. He thought of the future. His success ruined, his home broken up, his life blighted. Yes, it would be better if they were all dead.

He would go up stairs quietly, shoot them and then himself. It would be a painless instant death. Still how could he do it? How could he kill the wife he loved so dearly and the poor little child of his heart? All the love for his wife welled up in his mind, and he shook with his sobs.

Presently he grew quiet. He could not face death as a murderer. He could however end it all for himself. His life was his own and he had a right to do what he pleased with it. There was a good life insurance and some property—enough to provide for them very well. Again life insurance like guns may lead to suicide. That would be the simplest and best way.

Taking pen and paper, he began to write:

My beloved wife—I cannot face you and live with the terrible knowledge of how I have wronged you and our child. I did not mean this harm should come—I was ignorant—believe me dear, and forgive me. I thought the disease was cured. You will be better off when I am gone.

Say it was an accident. Good bye, Marion, sweetheart, Try to forgive me if you can, I cannot forgive myself.

Harry.

Then he placed the paper weight upon the sheet he had written and took up the gun. He looked into the frowning muzzle and wondered where he had better aim. He thought of himself in the coffin, and remembering of reading about a suicide case where the man shot himself in the mouth, he decided this would be the best and surest way, he did not want to suffer. Bracing his feet against the table legs, he opened his mouth and lifted the gun toward it.

Some time during the night Marion awoke and discovered that Harry was not in bed. She wondered why. She looked about and decided that he had not come to bed at all. The baby was sleeping soundly. She listened. Once she thought she heard someone talking. A sudden intuition of harm and danger came over her and she slipped hastily from the bed. Her bare feet made no noise on the stairs as

she crept down to the floor below. She saw the light coming from the den, and she drew the hangings aside slightly and looked in. There she saw her husband sitting at the table writing, and before him lay the gun. So intent was he that he neither saw nor heard the white figure that crept up and stood behind his chair. Just as he lifted the gun and placed it toward his mouth her white hand shot out and snatched the weapon away. When the man opened his eyes, he was staring into the horror stricken face of his wife.

"Harry Van Auker, what are you doing?" she cried almost in a scream.

"Read," he said hoarsely, pointing to the paper on the table. Holding the paper in one hand, and the gun in the other, she slowly read the note. Gradually the hand holding it drooped and the paper fell to the floor. She turned, put the gun into the drawer, turned the key and hid it among the books. Tears now blinded her, but dimly she saw where her husband was sitting, and she fell into his arms.

It is only fair that we should leave this husband and wife to settle their own affairs. No outsider can assist them now—their troubles are all their own.

It was evidently settled someway, for Harry Van Auker is still a successful artist and illustrator, and for all we know the home is a happy one, as happy as it could be under the circumstances. I often see the mother

with the child, always she leads him by the hand. His great brown eyes look but they see not. Under treatment the boy is growing and in apparent good health, but that Fate which decrees that the sins of the fathers shall go down to the sons, has given him a world of darkness. Two devoted parents may spend all manner of care and effort in his behalf, but still his world will be dark.

Dr. Xury has given me the facts for this story, of course in strictest professional confidence. He says that Harry is a changed man. He has paid a high price for his folly and his ignorance.

What a blessing it would be if every young man could know what he knows now, and if every young woman knew what Marion knows now. How true it is we need another life to make use of what we learn in this. How true too, that saying: Experience is a good teacher, but the price is high.

Harry Van Auker is paying the price.

The Confession of a Second Wife

I haven't the least idea what I am going to say will help any marriageable girl along the path of wisdom. Few of us care to take advice about our love affairs. I know I couldn't, though the truth is I had no one to advise me. It seems as if we must get our learning in the school of experience—some write it with capitals—from the pumps of life, from the hard knocks. I am not lamenting this, for it seems to be the plan of Providence or Fate. It is what is laid out for us poor atoms of the universe, learning over and over again each generation, the ways of life and Nature.

Neither can I say I would not do it all over again, knowing what I know now, for there is compensation. It is a poor soul that has nothing to compensate, to offset. In my case there is our great love—my husband's and mine, and that is enough. We are our own world, and,

"Nobody knows but God and I,
What is in my heart."

We know, Jerry and I, that our lives are good. We know too, what a difference there is between what we are and what people think we are. It is nice, I admit, to have everyone think you are good and be good too, and it is also very nice to have people think you are good when you're not. Most people care more about reputation than they do about character,

but my husband is not one of these. I think this fact has made it especially hard for me. A man can be stiff-necked and independent. He can look the world in the eye and tell it to go to hell, as he says, but, dear me, a woman can't do that or anything like it. A woman must be very tactful and discreet, for she has in her own sex her very worst critics and her most subtle enemies. "Ink fishes," Jerry calls them, and then he will hand out a long dissertation on the double moral standard, and bifocal ethics. Jerry is certainly a radical.

However, I must not wander from the story I have determined to tell. Even though I have expressed my doubts about its usefulness, still it may help some poor girl situated as I was, to see what is before her, even though it does not cause her to change her course. If just one gets a bit of help, I shall not have written in vain.

When I was nineteen all I had in this world was good health, fairly good looks—my hair and complexion being enough to save me from lapsing into the unattractive class—and a strong ambition to forget my foster mother. It was then Dr. Jerry came into my life. My father had married beneath him, they said, which meant he had married a poor man's daughter, instead of a rich one. Just as it usually happens his father had cut him off and he had to join the working class, a thing he was proud to do, strange as it may seem to some people. I can just remember him, a pale

blue-eyed man, with gentle ways. It was I who found him dead in his bed—I, a child of five, sent by my mother to call him to his breakfast.

"Papa won't wake up," I called down to her from the stairs. I did not know what death meant then. I realized it meant something dreadful by the way it affected my mother. When they came and carried my papa away and put him in the ground, I began to understand that I should not have any papa again. A year later my mother followed him, from broken heart, they told me when I was older.

Child though I was, I realized then that I was alone in the world and that no one really loved me. My poor old hardworking grandfather could not provide for me and was glad enough when Mrs. Sam Jerkins proposed "taking" me.

The first years of my stay in the Jerkins home, a home that God and nature seemed to have intended should be childless, are rather dim in my memory now, though I distinctly recall how I disliked this ugly woman who proposed to take my dead mother's place. She called me "my little girl" and "our little girl." My mamma was beautiful and had such wavy red-brown hair, and when she smiled, showed such even white teeth, you just wanted to kiss her. No one could take her place, surely not Mrs. Jerkins, with her one fang tooth sticking out over her lip. When this woman smiled it made me feel sick with dislike. Her tall and slender form, her wisp of hair twisted in a tight

little wad on the back of her head—her whole personality was so repulsive to me, a little child though I was, that years have only intensified it.

I can see now that I have grown older, she meant well enough, but I am sure God never intended she should have the care of children, which may be the reason none ever came to them. Yet she seemed to delight in showing me off. She would say to people, "What do you think of our girl?" Such remarks made me so angry I am sure they did not think well of me. I was ashamed of her and her deceitful ways. She really wanted to make people think I was her very own.

Once when the minister was calling, she prattled on about "our little daughter," allowing the good man to believe I was their own child, and he was a new minister too. My child temper got the best of me, and I cried out, "I am not your girl. My papa and mama are dead," and I rushed out of the room. When the preacher had gone she found me out and said I had the same as called her a liar. I must be punished she said, and she beat me with one of Sam's slippers. It is a great wrong for a child to hate anyone as I hated this woman.

Of course I went to school. That was one consolation. I had to spend less time with Mrs. Jerkins. On my way back one day, I found a forlorn little kitten and I carried it home. I knew what a storm it would raise if I let her see it, so I slipped into the basement with it, fixed a nest and fed it milk I had filched from

the kitchen. This poor little animal seemed so like myself, so friendless and lonely, that my love went to it forcibly. However, it died next day.

I found a shoe box for a coffin and dug a grave in the corner of the garden. I made a soft bed of cotton for my little dead friend and laid it tenderly to rest. I sang, "Jesus Lover of my soul," and said "dust to dust" as I shoveled in the dirt. On a piece of board I wrote, or printed, rather, "Kittie Keller, Died ——." I would not admit the name Jerkins for myself or my dead cat.

"Silly child, come in here and red up the dishes," said Mrs. Jerkins, when she discovered my occupation. "Sam'll 'tend to you when he gets home."

Often the old jade would lie, magnify and misrepresent my acts in order to cause Sam to "tend" to me. But the good old man understood, usually. He would take me on his knee and talk to me. Had he not been so dirty with his tobacco juice I should have liked him very well, or had he not been the husband of Mrs. Jerkins. He was an ignorant old chap, honest and kind. I remember still how rough his hands were and how in Winter they were full of cracks and bled at times. For this he would pour the cracks full of melted tallow, saying, "There, I'll bet that'll fix 'em."

Often when I carried his dinner bucket to the mill, he would thank me with a penny or a

nickel. Don't tell mother," he would say, "and spend it for candy on your way home."

If Mrs. Jerkins discovered I had candy she would pounce upon me, shake me by the shoulders, saying, "Mable Jerkins, you've been stealing. Where did you get money to buy candy?"

"I ain't been stealing and I ain't Mable Jerkins," I would say.

"Well, Jerkins is good enough to get your food and clothes with, an' it's good as Keller anyday, Miss Mable!"

Imagine a character like this for a daily example to a child. Indeed it seems to me, as I look back to those years, it is a wonder that I had any redeeming traits whatever. I was her errand runner, water and coal lugger, and I did tasks that no child of my age should have been asked to do. Each year my dislike for this woman increased.

I was never allowed to have even girl friends come to the house, and had a boy friend shown his face inside the gate it would have caused a Jerkins earthquake. The only pleasure I had with my school friends was away from home.

You may wonder what all this I am telling you of my childhood, has to do with the confessions of a second wife. It is that I want you to know the experiences I had which led up to the meeting of my husband. At fourteen I was sent to work in a store, and my foster mother took my wages regularly. I had to ac-

count for every cent I spent. She was surely trying to make me a good investment.

Before I went to the store I had become quite a successful peddler. Mrs. Jerkins was constantly answering advertisements and getting something for me to sell from door to door. There was soap, jewelry, kitchen utensils and what not. I was instructed how to say I only lacked one more to fill up my club. Would the kind lady help me out? Had Dickins known Mrs. Jerkins he would have used her as a cha racter as remarkable as Fagin. I am glad Dickins never knew her. I wish I never had.

When I was seventeen and seemed quite a young woman, I worked in a lumber office. My salary was then six dollars a week, but my keeper never allowed it to stay in my hands. I longed for another year to pass, then I resolved, I would say good bye to the Jerkins' home forever. I did not hesitate to tell Mrs. Jerkins my intention, and she informed me that I was "an ungrateful young huzzy."

"Where would you be now if we hadn't took ye in when ye didn't have a place to sleep even?"

I had long ago ceased disputing with this woman. She was just too ignorant to understand. I was grateful, especially to Sam, but this could never offset the insult and degradation she had imposed upon me, a helpless little child.

Near the lumber office was a little park and as I passed either going or coming, frequently

I saw a nicely dressed woman sitting on one of the benches. She smiled and spoke to me. After this had happened a few times she called me to her and we talked a few minutes. Nearly every pleasant evening she would be waiting for me as I finished my work, and we would walk home together. Little by little she drew out my sad story, and once she went to the Jerkins home with me. There she spoke a few words with my foster mother. Mrs. Jerkins was very cold and told the lady she "didn't care to have her daughter pickin' up with strangers."

The next day I was paid my six dollars. I went home gathered my few belongings in a bundle and wrote a note for Mrs. Jerkins. In it I told her I would trouble her no longer; that I was leaving her for good; that if ever I were able I would repay her for what she had done for me.

She was talking over the back fence with a neighbor. I could hear her voice as I wrote —how I hated that voice—I heard her cackling laugh. Fearing she might come in I scrambled my things together, left my note on the kitchen table and ran out the front door.

I was to meet my friend at the station and there I found her waiting. I have never known much about this woman, or who she was. It came afterwards to me that she was a woman of questionable repute, but surely she treated me kindly and gave me good advice. She evidently knew the world, and she may have been testing

herself to see if she was not altogether bad. I had confided in her my ambition to become a nurse. She approved of the idea. She took me now to a much larger city two or three hundred miles from my home, and there left me with the Mother Superior of a large Catholic hospital.

I had not been reared in the Catholic faith, yet this good woman soon became like a mother to me. She was the first person, since my parents had died that I really loved. Think of a child with as empty a heart as mine. It was she who protected me from Mrs. Jerkins, and under whose care. I was made a competent professional nurse.

I had not been at the hospital a year before Mrs. Jerkins' letters began to come. She not only wrote to me but to the Sisters. In these letters she called me a thief and a liar. She said I ran away with a common woman, and she did everything she could to drive me away from the place. When I received one of these letters, or she received one, the good sister would comfort me, saying she understood, not to mind; that this woman was insane or something. The letters—such a jumble of illiterate falsehood and obscenity I never realized could be written, and that by a woman. After this had gone on for some months, the Mother Superior had a lawyer write to Mr. and Mrs. Sam Jerkins, telling them if any more letters of the kind came, he would put the whole matter in the hands of the postal authorities to deal

with as they saw fit. Poor old Sam could not read, so I doubt if he ever knew anything about it. In any case, we received no more letters.

It was at the hospital I met Jerry. We all liked him, thirty or forty of us nurses. When I was on night duty for my ward, he would often sit by my table and talk. Dr. Jerry knew it was against the rules, but the Mother Superior thought as much of him as any of the rest of us, so he was a privileged character. Then too, Dr. Jerry was one of the, if not the rising young surgeon of the institution.

By and by, especially during my senior year, Dr. Jerry used to select me to take out on private cases. The hospital collected my fees, but I was glad of that, glad to repay them what I could for all they had done for me. Once when riding to a case, Dr. Jerry turned his car out into a country road.

"There is no hurry," he said, when I inquired why he was going that way, "little fresh air will do you good."

On this ride he talked to me about himself. I had never had a man talk to me that way before. I was past nineteen then and he was thirty-five. He told me of his unhappy married life. I have read since that men are prone to make confessions about their domestic unhappiness to young girls. I did not know then what strange animals men are. He said his wife was a good woman, but it had been a mistake from the first. He had been too young to know what he was doing then. She was a few years

his senior and had become his mother instead of his wife. She played the part of a jealous keeper. He thanked God there were no children.

As soon as he had any cause, he said he would make the break. He would make it kindly and decently if he could, but was bound to make it some way sooner or later.

"What I need," he went on to say, "is a young wife, one who will be my companion and friend instead of my guardian. If I were free today, Mable, I'd ask you to fill that place. I have learned to love you more than I ever thought possible."

"Oh, Dr. Jerry," I cried, "you mustn't talk to me that way. It isn't right."

"Right or wrong, it's true. What's the use, I say, little girl, what's the use? We've only one life to live, here at least, and if we don't get happiness out of it someway as we go along, we don't get any good from living, do we?"

I didn't know what to say. I had no experience with men, and not much with his kind of world either. I thought of Mrs. Jerkins and wondered if the doctor's wife was anything like her. Mrs. Jerkins made me feel sorry for him, just as I had been sorry for myself. Presently after we had been silent for some time, while his car went purring along the smooth country road, he asked abruptly if I did not love him.

"Yes, we all like you, Dr. Jerry."

"No, I mean you, not we. Do you not love me for myself. Suppose I were free today and asked you to marry me, what would you say, Mable?"

"I think I'd say yes, doctor, at least, by and by maybe."

"Then kiss me now."

I kissed him, first looking if anybody was about, to see us. My, how jolly wicked I felt! Someway the other woman did not seem to concern me. It was not my affair. All that was Dr. Jerry's affairs, not mine. I have had those who told me since I should have had nothing whatever to do with a married man. I admit this may have been good advise, still I could not help how things turned out.

Well, matters went along about as usual for several months. I had by this time finished my work at the hospital and had received my nurse's certificate. Dr. Jerry and his friends kept me busy most of the time. How rich I felt, earning a professional nurse's salary—all my own. I admit I took some pride in my clothes—my appearance you know. People seemed to like me all the better for that. I knew I was no less efficient because I insisted on my uniforms and all that goes to make up an outfit, being immaculate. They just had to admit my competency. Some of the money I earned I sent to poor old Sam Jerkins. All I received from them was the return registered letter cards. By this time Jerry had left his wife and one

day he told me he had determined to change his location to another town.

"As soon as I get a start, I will get you work there and you will come, won't you? I must be near you," he said. What could I do but agree, and why should I not? I had no one else but Jerry, and I have no one still.

After he had been gone a few weeks, his wife called on me. She wanted to see, she said, the woman that was coming between her and her husband. I did not know how to take her, or what to say. I was afraid of her in a way. She called me a poor deluded child. She did not blame me, she said, I did not know what I was doing. Then she went on telling me a long story of her domestic history. She made Jerry out a brute and a rascal and warned me I would live to rue the day I ever met him, just as she did.

"If the doctor is such a bad man, why do you care about all this?" I asked.

"I don't care, believe me. I am only too glad to be rid of him. All I want is justice now and the court will give me that, depend on it."

The more she maligned Dr. Jerry the more I seemed to like him. While I had done nothing wrong as I saw it, Jerry's wife made it her business to see that everybody thought I was the cause of her divorce action. I was not the cause of her troubles and Jerry has repeatedly said so. There was bound to be a break up in that home, and had I not come along to take a

place in his life, there would have been someone else, no doubt.

My work fell almost to nothing after Jerry left the town. I went to Mother Superior asking her what I had better do. She believed in me and said Dr. Jerry was very unwise to allow such a misfortune to come to an innocent girl.

Someway, however, I did not blame him. My love perhaps, made me blind to what might be called the hard facts and no doubt I was a biased judge. He wrote me of his lonely struggle to get a professional start in the new town to which he had gone. He said his wife had started her divorce action and he would not appear to oppose her, no matter what she made out in her petition. Let her make it out as badly as she pleased. The worst she made it the sooner she would set him free. He had given her everything he had in the world, and all he asked was that she should let him alone. But she did not do that, for she easily found persons or friends in the town where he had located, and soon set the gossiping tongues busy with his affairs. This is a subtle way that a woman can use to take her sweet revenge on the man who has failed to make her happy. You will notice I do not say, revenge on the man she has failed to make happy, for I realized how few unsuccessful wives will admit any blame to themselves. Maybe I would be like all the rest under like circumstances, but I do not think so now.

It was my good friend, the Mother Superior, who came to me at last telling me I had been made corespondent in the divorce case, and that plenty of witnesses were at hand to say how often I had been seen riding with the doctor, etc. She advised me to get my credentials together and leave the place. No matter how innocent I may be, my chances for work and success there had been ruined. This advice I followed at once, going to a city of size in the middle West. There I landed, a lonely little stranger, with my suit case and trunk, a few dollars of my savings and just one friend in all the world that I could really call my own, Dr. Jerry. And all I had of him was his letters. Don't think I am forgetting the good Sisters at the hospitals and the nurses, but some way they seemed a long way off and I was very much alone.

I was lucky at this place. I found work almost from the start. My boarding house with a widow lady was homelike, and she began to mother me at once, a good soul. I was not much at home with her, for one or two doctors took a fancy to me, and after the first case or two, when I had proven my competency, they kept me at work. It was not altogether a game of catching somebody's fancy. Still I always felt as if I should have had a much harder time had I been altogether plain, even far more capable. In the hospital we were taught to be motion machines without emotion. The ideal nurse we were told, was one with no feelings of

her own that might come between her and duty. This hardening of the heart may be well enough in institutional work, but I found it paid me well to show an interest in people when I began my work outside. I therefore tried to be nice to everybody.

I soon had several men who wanted to be especially friendly in one way or another, but I repulsed them all as kindly as I could. Dr. Jerry always came into my mind. I saw him working away alone, doing his best to make our future happiness possible. Every letter was full of his plans and hopes. Success was coming slowly. My work and these letters were all I had to live for then.

There was one thing I gave Mrs. Jerkins credit for. She made me believe a cent was a very great thing and it was easy for me to be prudent and saving with my money. While I liked nice things I did not spend a dollar foolishly. The good Sisters had added to my practical ideas of life and things. Before the year I worked at this place was up, I had quite a little fund in the savings bank and it was a source of great comfort to me. Money can be a good friend to us, as well as a bad enemy.

After I had been away from Jerry about a year, I received a telegram one day. It said the divorce was granted and he was coming for me. I was happy, there is no need to deny that. As soon as he arrived and hugged me in his big arms, I knew everything would be all right. We immediately went for the license

and a judge at the court house married us. That night we took the train for the West and our honeymoon trip found us in Denver and at other places of interest among those wonderful mountains of Colorado.

When the month we had planned to spend was over, Jerry said, "Now we'll go back and beard the lion in his den."

You may think I have been a long time coming to the point in my story where the "confessions of a second wife" begin, but I could not make you know me and what I am in any other way. The first year of our married life I was Jerry's office nurse. It was lovely to be with him again, working together, just as we used to at the hospital only now a hundred times dearer. We had a cute little apartment attached to the office, and these we fixed up as fast as we could. Here my savings account came into good use. It was the first real home I had ever known. Our evenings we spent playing chess, reading or with music. If we went out it was to the theatre or to some public place. Scarcely anyone sought our acquaintance, and though the doctor was becoming quite generally known, we did not seem to have any social advantages or opportunities —indeed we did not seek any. We were so happy together we did not seem to miss these things. You may readily understand from the experiences I have related, I was entirely inexperienced in social affairs, and knew nothing of the ways and means of social climbers. I hated

snobbery as much as I used to hate Mrs. Jerkins.

I had learned never to say anything personal to anyone, and never to repeat what was said to me. Some of the apartment neighbors were friendly and talkative, but they could not understand why I did not join in with all their gossip. The average gossip is one who seems to seek obscurity or security, or both, to cover their own shortcomings by besmudging other people. Ink fishes, Dr. Jerry calls them. For this reason I was misjudged. Some made it their business to investigate the doctor's past history, and how or by what means they traced it, I never knew. Not that we had anything to cover up or that we were ashamed of, still you know what the usual thought is about divorce. I was conscious of a change in my neighbors very presently.

One day I overheard my next door neighbor say to the woman below:

"No wonder she has nothing to say. The doctor is a divorced man, and they say she caused it. She had just better keep still."

This woman was divorced herself and had all manner of callers. We often heard their ribald jokes, their parodies on the popular songs, through the partitions. Because I wanted to live true and kind, avoiding all gossip and tales-mongering, I was branded. I wanted friends that were true, but I did not expect to find them among the tenants of our present quarters.

At my suggestion Jerry took a house in a resident district and moved his offices to a more central location in the business section. This brought us into close contact with many nice families. We had good things for our home by this time and Jerry had a new car. As far as money goes or what it will buy, we were as good as any of our neighbors. Some of the ladies called. They were very nice to me. One family, good Catholics, were especially friendly because I had been trained in a Catholic hospital. This Mrs. Brindlay could not do enough for me. She would run in with bits of something particularly good—she took great pride in her cooking—and I would go back the next day or so with her dish and sit in a few minutes with fancy work or merely to chat. Not long after this the calls suddenly ceased, and one day I saw her on the car, but she looked the other way, refusing to see me. For a moment I was hurt, and I cried a little when I told Jerry about it.

"She has probably heard the same old story," he said.

I am too proud to beg favors of anybody, so, when I met this woman after that I held my head just as high as she did. My love for the dear old Mother Superior had always made me favorable to Catholics, though I had not embraced the faith. However, I found people are all about alike no matter to what church they may claim alliance.

Next to our house was the beautiful new

home of a saloon keeper. His wife was kind and friendly. She was an excellent housekeeper, and we had many nice chats across the lawn as we tended our flowers. We exchanged many informal calls. Other neighbors saw this and one good woman, one I valued very much, gave me the advise that if I expected people to have anything to do with me, I must not call on the saloon keeper's wife.

Dear me, I thought, what a world it is! People class themselves according to their business, past vicissitudes and what not. They make up their lists from any and every motive but the one of real personal friendship and mutual attraction. However, we soon left the neighborhood to occupy a new house of our own and I was saved from openly hurting the feelings of poor Mrs. Saloonist. I have insisted in keeping my friendship with her, for she is good and true, even though her husband does sell liquor.

Not one word had I said in all this time about personal things. I demanded that people take me as I am and for what I am, or leave me alone. I have always been a good girl and a good woman. If it was a sin to love Jerry it is a sin I am proud of. We have been so happy together it has been well worth all it cost.

At Jerry's suggestion we began attending the Unitarian church. The doctor said these people are among the most intelligent and fair minded in the world. The minister called upon

us and we resolved to go regularly and make for ourselves a social circle. For several Sundays we attended the service. Everybody was friendly and seemed happy to meet us. I know we looked fit. I had a new suit and my hat was as up-to-date as any I saw there. We drove up in our new car making as good a turnout as anyone could wish. We had nothing of which to be ashamed.

I was invited and went to the Ladies' Society—once. I only went once—the climate was too cold. It was at a fine home. We—the ladies went in and seated ourselves. The maids brought us tea and wafers. There was much chatting and small talk. Everybody seemed to know everybody, but nobody knew me. I sat in my corner alone, sipped my tea and made my getaway as soon as I could decently.

"So glad to have met you," my hostess said, as I pressed her hand at my going. "Sorry you cannot remain longer. Good bye, Mrs. Doctor————."

I felt her coldness and her deceit. Jerry says the same old snake trailed in there no doubt, with his wicked venom. He says I must not mind. I am too sensitive. In time people will come to know us better and will like me for myself. Meantime let them say what they say.

It is all very well for a man to talk, but I know women. I have nursed them and studied them under all circumstances. The meanest, most contemptible enemy a woman has is

some other woman. They are poor narrow-minded, shallow-souled mortals, most of them. Their sex history for many ages has developed just this thing as a sex instinct in the human female.

The only real friend I have made during my married life is an old maid school teacher, who cares no more about men than she knows about the scenery on the moon. Of course I know Jerry does not realize the price he has made me pay for loving him and marrying him. I don't want him to realize. I expect it will be different some day, especially when we have children of our own.

I am happy now for the stork is coming our way by and by. When this comes I won't care for the slights I get that I don't deserve. Up to now I've only had my cat, my horse and Jerry to love. Now somebody else is coming.

I won't say I have anything to regret. I have just the best and kindest husband that ever lived. He has been my friend and teacher. He has made up for all that barren childhood. Now when the baby comes my happiness will be complete. What will I care for the rest of the world?

"Only God and I,

Know what is in my heart,"

and God knows I have never done a wrong thing intentionally and very few unintentionally.

I hope though, the good fates may save other girls from what I have experienced. If

love can come to you without the price I have paid for mine, it is well. I hope it may, but if you must pay, then do it, for there is compensation. I only hope you may find another like Jerry. But I doubt it, for I tell him there is not just such another man as he in all this world.

Dr. Xury's Marvelous Cure.

"There is absolutely nothing wrong with the woman," Dr. Xury was saying to the group of doctors about him, having what they called a consultation over the case of Mrs. J. DeWitt Smith. It may have been a consultation, but it appeared more like a smoker at the Medical Club. "The Doctors' Room" at the hospital now contained the chief of medical staff, Dr. Bumpus, young Snypers, the house surgeon, Dr. Milton Moore, chief of surgical staff, and our old friend Dr. Xury T. Lane.

"She can't walk because she won't walk, or I might say because she hasn't walked for fifteen years—not that anyone has seen. Her wires are down and she can't get central. The muscles of her legs and her will are divorced."

"Do you mean to say the cross fibers of the cortex are functionally disassociated, so to speak?" interposed Dr. Bumpus.

"No, the trouble is in the pons, or in the coordination function of the cerebellum," Dr. Moore observed with a smile.

"Now here, Moore," said Dr. Xury, "let us end this nonsense. You all saw that her reflexes are normal, all of them; she has all her faculties except she can't walk. There is some atrophy of her leg muscles, but not as much as we might expect after all these years of disuse.

As I said before, she can't walk because she won't; bcause she thinks she can't. We must then make her think she can and she will. When she wills to walk she can. She will walk. She can walk."

"You better can that!" Snypers said, who never passed up a chance to try to be funny.

"Snipes-on-toast, you're in the wrong calling. You should be the right end-man in a a minstrel show," Xury replied.

"I couldn't be that—I'm left handed," and with that telling thrust the house docter leered at Dr. Xury, rumbled a fresh cigarette between his palms and rushed off to the laboratory.

"Leave her to me, Bumpus. I will use drugless healing on her."

"What?" asked Dr. Moore, eyeing Dr. Xury closely.

"Psycho-therapy—mental suggestion," Dr. Lane replied.

"She has had all of these things," Dr. Bumpus explained.

"I know, but she hasn't had my kind of Psycho-therapy. It is something new, at least to her."

"Tell us, tell us," Dr. Moore commanded.

"Provided only that I am to have full charge and get all the glory."

"Agreed!" they cried.

"Then listen. I will give her a little teaser of the will called Dr. Pacquelin Cautery!"

"That's rather tough, isn't it, Lane?" Moore was a tender hearted fellow, and little deserved his reputation as the "hospital butcher" as some made bold to call him on account of his many fearless operations. However, no one questioned his skill as a careful surgeon.

"It is the only thing I can think of to make a quick connection between her will and her legs. When it is over the memory will linger, too. This will tend to save relapse. She has been talked to by New Thought healers and prayed over by Christian Scientist. At eleven fifty-five each day, she tells me, she has concentrated her mind—and she says she once had a powerful mind—on getting well. 'I will be well, I will be well, I am not sick. Disease is thought error. Away wrong thoughts.' This or something like it she repeated over and over, until twelve five. Ten minutes of intense concentration, she tells me. Somehow she lacked the necessary faith or something was wrong, and it did not do the work. However, these absent treatments cost her four dollars each and were from one of the most celebrated healers close to the original font in dear old Boston.

"As Bumpus knows, she has taken drugs enough to stock a small drugstore. She has been Homeopathed, Allopathed and Schuetslerized. She has been Galvanized, Faradized and Mesmerized. She has been ozoned, vibrated and X-rayed. She has paid for several static machines in fees. The violet-ray has been turn-

ed on her back. She has had electric light baths, electric medicated baths and the whole line of several dozen hydro-therapy stunts. Masseurs from Sweden have rubbed, swatted, pinched, punched and pummeled her. Osteopaths from our dear Kirksville, Mo., have given her wise counsel and many manipulations. And last but not least a Chi-ro-prac-tic brother only recently adjusted and replaced seven subluxed bones of her spinal column. How this terrible condition could have been missed by all her other doctors, she says, is something she cannot understand. She admits it hurt her considerably when this wonderful new doctor fixed her spine, but still for some strange reason it has done no good. I did not tell her what I am going to do will hurt her ten times more, but she will find that out later. The doctor tells her that the nerves have been impinged upon—impinged, wonderfully effective word that, isn't it?—so long that a degenerative process has set in, making her restoration extremely precarious and the duration necessarily protracted! These are her words, not mine. Well, he extracted about five hundred dollars of their money, before she lost faith and hope—charity she could not see in the matter.

"This unhappy result now brings her to us. She has traveled around the circle. She has employed every sort of cure, pathy and ism. She has kept her husband poor paying the bills. He says he has spent a fortune on her, to say nothing of his own loss of time

and worry about it. It is fortunate that the majesty of the law overlooks the fact that several sorts of doctors constantly obtain money under false pretense, and are seldom if ever molested. The same methods if used by a horsetrader or a merchant would land either in the pen. Then we, real medical profession, must pay the penalty of public confidence sacrificed, because of all this sort of thing. It is so disgusting I sometimes wish I had been a sailor or something commendable."

"Well Xury, if you have got that all out of your system, I think I'll go," said Dr. Moore, and the conference ended.

The next day Dr. Xury had his preliminary interview with his patient, Mrs. J. DeWitt Smith. Everybody knew her husband as Jim Smith the wholesale grocer, but Mrs. Smith has elitized James out of it.

"Mrs. Smith," the doctor began, "I am going to cure you. I am going to make you walk."

"Oh, doctor, I wish I could believe you."

"You must believe me. Inside of ten days you will walk out to your carriage and go home."

This was said so calmly and with such assurance that Mrs. Smith smiled through her tears.

"Tell me doctor, what I must do."

"Do nothing but get well and walk, work and act like other folks."

"Oh, if I only could!"

"You really want to be well, Mrs. Smith?"

"How can you ask me such a question, doctor? I'd rather die than be this way all my life."

"All right, then I'll tell you what we must do. There seems to be some obstruction to the motor impulses that come from the motor areas in the brain, so that your will or wish to walk does not reach the muscles of your legs. We must use the actual cautery over your back at certain places. We can locate this area fairly well, but should the first application fail, we must extend the treatment downward until the right part has been reached."

Mrs. Smith was listening intently.

"Will I have to take ether, doctor?"

"No, we will not use an anesthetic, for we wish to make as much impression on the cerebral centers as we can." (There is no lie about that, the doctor thought.)

"Won't it hurt me dreadfully?"

"Yes, it will hurt some of course, but only for an instant, and I hope very much we shall not have to repeat the process. If we make the right impression by the second day you will be able to take a few steps. On the third day you should be able to walk across the room and by the fourth day, out into the hall. One week from tomorrow you will walk out to your carriage and thereafter, as your muscles gain strength, you will walk as well as you ever did when a girl."

"It's too good to be true! Oh, doctor, if you cure me your fortune is made."

"No, I am not working for a fortune. My only thought is to get you well."

All that day Mrs. Smith worried about the next morning. Many times she asked the nurse if she thought it would hurt very much, how long it would take, what had been her experience with such cases, if she ever saw a case just like hers before, and a dozen other questions showing her great concern. She slept little during the night. The morning brought her a variety of moods. At moments she lost all faith in the plan and wept bitterly. Presently she would recover herself and declare she was ready and willing for she knew Dr. Xury T. Lane knew his business.

When the appointed hour had come, the nurse wheeled the patient into the operating room and bared her back.

"If I were not sure of success in this case I would feel like a cruel wretch to torture this woman as I am about to do," said Dr. Xury quietly to the house doctor, as they started the Pacquelin cautery going in the instrument room off the surgery.

"We are ready, nurse, whenever you are," called the doctor through the doorway.

Presently they came in, the cautery wheezing and the white hot platinum tip glowing.

"Oh, doctor, I can't stand it, I know I can't," Mrs. Smith cried out the moment she saw the apparatus.

"I think you can or I would not do it," said the doctor calmly.

"I shall faint, I know I will."

"Very well, madam, it is for you to say. Shall we give it up?"

"Give me a little time, doctor, just a little time."

While they waited the cautery tip cooled to a dull red, then to the color of the metal. The doctors waited saying not a word. Mrs. Smith sat in the operating chair, holding the blanket to cover her chest, and looking at the doctor. Finally she said, "Go ahead and do it. I'll stand it if it kills me."

"Very good. It will not kill you, it will cure."

Once more the cautery was pumped and the tip turned white. Dr. Xury advanced and touched the tip to the white skin of Mrs. J. DeWitt Smith's back near the spine. She screamed and flitched, as well she might, for the skin sizzled and smoked. One more touch opposite, after a moment of waiting followed by more screams. In all ten of these burned spots were made, causing several times as many screams. Distant orderlies and nurses to say nothing of disturbed patients, wondered what was going on in the operating wing.

"There, it's done," said the doctor. "Dress it nurse, I am sure the wounds are aseptic." Turning to leave, he said, "I will see you toward evening, Mrs. Smith." The poor soul

was sobbing too much to pay any attention. In telling of it afterwards Dr. Xury said he felt guilty of almost barbaric cruelty, yet he knew he was justified.

Toward night he found his patient nearly recovered from her shock, cheerfully waiting to see him.

"Oh, but you punished me dreadfully, doctor," was her greeting.

"We have to be cruel sometimes to be kind," he replied.

"I hope," he continued, "this will end it. If by tomorrow afternoon you have not walked at least three steps, from your bed to that chair, then the next morning we must continue the burning lower down the spine. You will try and see how the result has been by tomorrow."

"Yes, doctor, I will try. I think I begin to feel more power in my limbs already."

The doctor smiled and thought, "the suggestive power of Pacquelin is surely great."

Mrs. Smith slept well that night, ate a good breakfast and when the usual morning program was over, she called her nurse.

"I want you to fix me to try a few steps. I can move my legs better in bed I know. I believe if you will let me sit on the edge of the bed, and you stand by the chair over there to be ready in case I fall, I can do it. I would not have Dr. Lane fail in my case for the world, he is such an earnest good fellow, don't you think so nurse?"

"Dr. Lane is surely devoted to his work. No doctor could be more sincere and we think none more competent," the nurse replied.

Presently things were arranged and Mrs. Smith sat swinging her legs from the side of the high surgical bed.

"See nurse, I can use them," she cried like a pleased child.

The nurse came and helped her down to the floor. "Now walk to the chair and I will steady you."

This was done, Mrs. Smith trembling and somewhat wabbly on her legs, reached the chair safely and without falling.

"Oh, to think I have walked four steps and not one step have I taken before in fifteen years! What will my poor husband say?" and at the thought of this she burst into tears.

After a little time the nurse called Dr. Xury over the telephone.

"She has done it. She walked to her chair, four or five steps. I supported her just a little but not much."

"Let her try to walk back to the bed alone," the doctor said and gave further orders about the massage of the wasted muscles.

Next morning Dr. Xury burst into the consultation room, saying, "Eureka! I have found a new drugless healing system that beats them all. My patient Mrs. Jim Smith or Mrs. J. DeWitt Smith, just as you prefer, has walked already a total of eight steps. She is very tired she says, from this long journey, but tomorrow

she promises to pace around the room. In a week she will be able to enter the Marathon race."

"Well, it's really remarkable," said Dr. Moore.

"No, there is nothing remarkable about it, except the fact that the human will may be reached by many means. Listen, I want to get this off my mind."

They gathered about Dr. Xury knowing the signs that meant he was about to deliver an interesting observation.

"The power of mind over the bodily functions is not a new discovery. All we have is a few new methods of accomplishing the same old result. During the Crusades, weak and famished soldiers of the Cross fought like demons and won miraculous victories because they believed they followed the holy spear, the very one that had pierced the side of Jesus. The spear was a fake, but it did the business. Joan of Arc led the French armies, clad in a soldier's trappings and the men believed, as she believed, that she was guided by supernatural voices. This little maid was troubled with nothing more than hallucinations, but she did wonders. A man in hard luck consults one of these fortune tellers, clairvoyants or what not, and is told that great success awaits him just around the corner. He goes out believing, gets in line with natural causes and wins. Same thing again. A poor drunk listens to the songs and the exhortations of the Salvation Army.

He sees a ray of hope. He somehow comes to believe he may yet be a man, and he braces up and tries the better way. Presently through the help of those about him, he gets a job. Then he fights his way to freedom from the drink habit, using a will power that is much improved by his faith and religious emotions. He then gets up in the meetings and tells others what Jesus has done for him."

"How about Christian Science?" asked Dr. Bumpus.

"The same," said Dr. Xury. "If the will is stimulated by the needed faith in the prayers and the program of mental gymnastics prescribed, and if no organic trouble stands in the way, wonders can be done for functional disorders. It matters not how this effect on the will is secured. The various drugless healing cults represent just so many roads that lead to Rome, that is, the stimulation of the will."

"How about reported cures of organic lesions such as broken bones, etc.?" Dr. Moore asked.

"They cannot demonstrate a single case of the kind, by any experimental evidence that a jury of rational minded men would accept. This is an interesting field. There is just mystery enough about such cases to allow superstition to take hold firmly. A man who has not walked for years, falls in the hammock and receives a good bump on the floor. Then he gets up and walks as good as anybody, except for his muscular weakness. A boy has not spoken

a word for months or years, and suddenly cries out because the house is on fire, and thereafter talks as other people. Sightless eyes have suddenly come to see, ears that heard not now hear and so on to the end of these functional disorders. Do you think a degenerated optic nerve or an ankylosed bony chain of the ear ever recovered function? Did a case of locomotor ataxia or real paresis ever get a cure? Nay, not one.

"Coming now to our case, Mrs. Smith, let us admit that at one time she may have had a congestion or something along the motor tract somewhere which did produce a temporary paralysis. She could not use her legs then, but since that passed she has only thought she could not. Her general weakness and the muscular atrophy have aided her in that belief. Now her faith in me and her fear of further treatment from Dr. Pacquelin have caused her to use her will and make an effort. As far as her strength will allow this has been a success. It is now only a matter of giving the muscles exercise and food, and we shall record another wonderful cure by drugless methods. All hail to psycho-therapy!"

"Hurrah for Dr. Xury," they shouted and went to their various tasks.

It was a happy group that met in Mrs. Smith's room the evening of her "first four steps in fifteen years."

"To think, husband," said the patient, "that I am going to walk like other women."

"Let us hope it will be permanent," Mr. Smith observed. He had been in the curing game so long and had seen so many repeated failures, no one could blame him for a pessimistic attitude.

"Oh, Dr. Xury says there will be no relapse, and if there is it is only a matter of burning my spine some more. I don't think it will be necessary, my dear, ever to do that again."

"Let us hope not," he said with a smile. It is quite likely he began to understand Dr. Xury's treatment idea, but was far too wise to belittle it in any way. It was results that interested him.

Day by day Mrs. Smith's efforts to walk continued with better success. By the end of the week she could make the whole length of the hospital corridor. A bit out of breath when she reached her own door again but smiling and happy. "My, wasn't that a splendid long trip?" she said.

On the eighth day she was dressed for the street and walked out to the cab holding gently to her husband's arm.

"Dr. Lane, you will never see me here again."

"I hope not, madam, for your sake, not ours."

"You have treated me dreadfully and wonderfully. I can never thank you enough or

pay you enough. I shall cry out your name from the house tops."

"Don't do that," he said, "it would be advertising, and doctors are not allowed to advertise."

"I shall advertise you just the same," and with smiles and good byes, they drove away.

The next day the newspapers carried a story headed:

> Mrs. J. DeWitt Smith cured. A helpless invalid for fifteen years. Has not taken a step in all that time, now well and walking. Restored by a remarkable operation done by Dr. Xury T. Lane.

So the story went on for a column or more, giving details with the usual glowing inaccuracy of the usual reporter's story of any medical matter.

"Who wrote the advertisement?" asked Dr. Moore of Xury as they met next day.

"Not guilty!" said Dr. Xury.

"Well, it will do you some good anyway," the surgeon said. Like all doctors he understood the value of publicity.

"I hope it will, though I had nothing whatever to do with it. I fear it will be the only fee I shall ever get from the case."

"How's that?"

"Well you see, Jim Smith tells me he has spent about every dollar he had or could get hold of, on his wife's treatments. You see the other fellows beat me to it."

"There it is again, the same old story. Oh, Honesty, where is thy reward?" Dr. Moore observed.

"Oh, I may get a fee some time. Jim Smith is a square chap and says he will pay me. I've had my real pay though."

"How?" asked Moore.

"My pay was the pleasure I felt to see that poor deluded woman get her mental and physical legs under again. My pay was to see the joy in poor old Jim Smith's face when he saw his wife walking. My pay will be the smile of gratitude they will give me, the glad hand of welcome when we meet, the consciousness of doing a human service—that's my pay."

"Yes, but it won't help on the rent or the grocer's bill."

"I know, I know, we must attend to that dear dollar also," laughed Xury. By this time the usual group was again in the Doctor's room.

Said Doctor Moore:

"Your cure of Mrs. Smith, Xury, makes me think of a story old Doctor Betterman used to tell, about Sim Perkins, who lived down there in Perryville near him. Dr. Betterman had been called so often and at every hour of day or night, with no prospect of pay, that finally the doctor became disgusted, especially when on all occasions there was little if anything the matter with Sim. People generally said he was too lazy to breathe and pretended sickness so the neighbors would bring in things to eat and encourage their hard lot by giving Mrs. Perkins

washings to do. No matter how sick Sim seemed to be his appetite was always good.

"Mrs. Perkins it seems was a worthy hard-working woman, and but for her the family surely would have been on the town. I am not sure whether Sim was a simple feigner or an hysteric. At any rate the old doctor decided he had been made a dupe long enough. On one occasion he fixed up such an outrageous mixture of quassa, gentian and assafoetida that he thought would be so rotten to take that it would be a long time before Sim would want to see him again. Within a week Dr. Betterman had another call.

" 'Say, doc,' said Sim, 'that was gol derned powerful medicine ye sent me, but I think it's chirkin' me up some. Can ye fix me up another bottle like it?'

"Dr. Betterman said he knew then nothing short of prussic acid would rid him of such a patient. However, on the occasion in question he resolved to try a new experiment. Taking Mrs. Perkins aside he put her next and then went in to Sim, who was moaning and writhing on his bed. Sim did not know they had sneaked up to the window, which was open, and saw him resting comfortably. When he heard the doctor approach the bed, then the pain began.

"Betterman used to say it was a bad thing to feel as he did toward Sim for some day he might be sick in truth and no one would be-

lieve him. In any case he knew at this time it was the same old bluff.

"'Well, Sim, what's the matter now?' he asked.

"'Oh, doc, the misery is all over me, in my head, in my back and legs. My heart stops beatin' every little while an' I can't get my breath.'

"After examining him with some care, during which Sim had seemingly lapsed into a state of coma vigil, the doctor turned to Mrs. Perkins and said, 'Madam, I am afraid your husband is done for this time, I guess he has already gone.'

"'Well, I hope to the Lord he has,' she replied, according to their secret arrangement.

"'Yes,' said the doctor, rubbing his hand across Sim's brow, 'Yes, he's getting cold already. Poor old Sim, he has gone to rest. Nobody ever said he was much of a worker, but he had his good points. Good-bye, Mrs. Perkins, I'll stop at the undertaker's and tell him he better come right over and get the body ready for burial.'

"The doctor had scarcely reached the door when Sim kicked off the bed clothes, yelled like an Indian on the warpath and came running into the kitchen.

"'Come back, you old skinflint. Here you she devil, I ain't dead yit. Ye needn't send fer no undertaker,' and there followed a blue streak of swearing not suitable for print, but seemingly helpful to Sim.

"'Well, Sim, we knew you were not sick, so we tried a little experiment on you and it has worked splendidly. It is what we call psycho-therapy or mental healing.'

"'Psycho-hell! I'll send and git a doctor that knows suthin'. You don't know nothin'.'

"All right, good-bye, Mr. Perkins, the doctor replied and went away laughing.

"People round about heard the story and Sim never saw the last of it. If they wished to nag him they would say, 'Well, Sim, what do you think of mental healing?'

"The good part of old Doctor Betterman's story is that Sim was so ashamed of being the butt of the joke, he braced up and worked better than he ever had before, and was never sick a day thereafter."

Mrs. King's Boarding House.

"I never would 'a' took her, Ezra, only she's Jim Little's sister. I did it—I broke the rule to please Jim. 'Tain't likely she'll stay long, Ezra."

We, the boarders at Mrs. King's Boarding House, knew how frequently the good old woman refused to accept women boarders. "I've got nothin' agin 'em," she used to explain to us as we sat about her long table, "but I'm keepin' a home for stray men, till they gets homes of their own. I don't say 'cause a woman, old or young, ain't got no home to go to, 'cept a boarding house, it's anything agin her. I've got my hands full tendin' to my boys. The Lord will have to provide some other place for lone women folks."

Mrs. King's "boys" were just as well pleased that she took this attitude. We boys, at least those under her roof any time at all, learned to love the old lady. She mothered us all without fear or favor. She laid out our weekly laundry, inspected and mended the holes in our socks, carried our ties to the kitchen to be ironed out, and in sickness nursed us back to health. Some of us were young and looked the future in the face hopefully. A few were on the seamy side of life—bald old boys,

who had no other ambition or expectation than to finish out the game of existence in Mrs. King's or a similar hostelry. Conspicuous among those we called the old boys, though he was still under forty, was Simon Newbury—Sim as we called him—a bank teller long ago ruined by the salary habit, he said. We called Sim old not so much because of his years as his bald pate and quiet ways. He never joined us in any of our nightlarks. He was as regular and punctual as the time lock on the safe at the bank.

Mrs. King was kind to Sim, though she favored the "dinner pail" set—young mechanics.

"I'd rather board a man," she often said, "with a good appetite—one that enjoys his vittels an' don't go pickin' and leavin' things. These men with finnicky stomachs are as tiresome as invalid women."

Still when "old Sim" took sick she would not hear of his going to a hospital. We suspected she knew more of Simon Newbury's history than we did. While she was a woman that talked much she was exceedingly wise with what she did not say.

(We must crave pardon of those experts in the art of short story writing for bringing Sim into the opening scene of our play, for this is not Sim's story.)

Ezra King looked at his wife over his spectacles. A smile flitted about his clean shaven lip as he held the evening paper aside to listen to his wife's explanation.

Mr. King,—"Papa" King we called him, was a sprightly old fellow of eighty. If anyone asked his age he would say, "Waal, I ain't so young as I used to be, nor as old as I look, but if the Lord spares me till the twenty-first of the coming June, I'll be eighty-one." For many years Mr. King had been a deacon in the First M. E. Church and passed the contribution box with precision and care. He always paused at his own pew, holding the long handle out toward his wife, smiled, stroked his snow white beard, received a smile in return as she dropped in her mite, and trudged along down the aisle.

Ezra King had been a carriage and wagon maker. His shop was not large enough to be absorbed by the trust and too small to kill outright. For at least twenty years he and his few workmen kept the place going on repair work and such odd jobs as came his way. He said he had to work to keep from dying.

There had been more prosperous days, and the King family then enjoyed some social prominence. This was in the pre-trust period, soon after the Civil War. The sons—we knew about the children for Mrs. King would start on them with the slightest provocation—were both married and prosperous men in Chicago, with families of their own. There were two daughters, one the wife of a diplomat in the government service in Europe, and the other the wife of a New York banker.

"The children don't think much of my keeping boarders," Mrs. King explained, "but, land sakes, I ain't goin' to live in this big house alone. Ezra and I want young folks about us. We'd die if we had to go traipsin' around the world the way they do. We're doin' our part of the Lord's work jest this way. I'd rather do it, if I didn't make a cent on 'em."

However that might be, we knew very well that once a week we had to "come across" with our board money, and we knew a little red book down in the old book-case desk where our accounts were kept correct to the cent.

"Keepin' boarders is like any other business," she would say, "an' so long as any boy of mine is well and workin' he's got to pay his bills. I ain't sayin' what I'd do if any one of 'em got sick."

We knew how the good old soul had kept Jim Little that time he broke his leg, and how she stood the doctor off for twelve weeks that Jim was trying to get his bones spliced together again. She declared nobody took any risk on a boy with such eyes as Jim Little had. Jim proved it too, for when the leg got well, in due time all the bills were paid.

(It does seem odd how these minor parts slip into this play. This isn't Jim's story any more than it is old Sims'.)

"Waal, Ma, you always did favor Jim Little. 'Tain't for me to say he ain't deservin' an' you know best, Ma, you know best." Then the

old man lifted his paper to continue his reading.

"She's coming to-night and Jim's gone to meet her now. So I better get that front room tidied up a bit for her. No tellin' what fussin' she'll make," and the old lady pattered off up stairs.

(If our play had a good orchestra we would ask now for a bit of low weird music, and the switch tender would put out all the lights except the "spot" for Lottie Little would be the whole show, except for Ezra and Ma King. It is their show, you can see that, but Lottie is the one who gets the bulky envelope at the box office every Tuesday night.)

It floated about the house, the news did—if that is the proper way to speak of news—that Jim's sister was coming, and we heard it as we came in one by one from our work at the supper hour. Those of us who worked with hands always "got ready" for supper. Mrs. King's was not a **table d'hote**, nor was it a catch-as-catch-can affair. We sat down with more or less military precision. Supper was our one meal of state and "Papa" King always said grace. We knew all the old man's blessings. He had three for everyday use and a few special ones for such unusual days as Christmas, Thanksgiving and the like. Some of the boys had them numbered, number one, number two, and number three. They would bet such reckless stakes as a cigar or a nickel which one it would be. It seemed a little sac-

rilegious to me, still we could not help smiling at this sporting interest. Number one started, "Lord, we thank thee for this food. Bless us as we partake of it. Watch over us as we spend the strength in Thy service, that all may redound to Thy glory, Amen." Number two was more crisp and crackly, like a new bank note, but, no,—let us desist. There is the cue, and here comes Lottie.

"My, my! Mrs. King, what a nice family of boys you have got."

This was after Jim had pronounced our names all around the table, and each one of the "boys," even old Sim, had made a neat little bow to the—intruder. (There might be a better word than that, but just now it has slipped me.)

"Jim," said Mrs. King, "did I hear you call your sister Mrs. Arnold?"

"There, Jim, I told you, you would get these folks mixed up," interrupted Lottie. "I am a widow, Mrs. King. My maiden name was Lottie Little."

"Are you grass or sod, Mrs. Arnold?" old Sim asked. How shocked we were! No one even suspected that old bald head of humor.

"What a precocious boy your youngest is, Mrs. King," said the girl, trying to make the best of it. Her face reddened for a moment. "No, sir, I am only a plain grass widow. Jim should not have used that name for the court has said I am now just Lottie Little again, with no handles or attachments."

We boys were a little embarrassed by the turn of affairs, but Mrs. King came to our rescue.

"You will have to excuse the boys," the old lady said, "they are not used to havin' ladies in the family."

At this the table talk went along to things less personal and the meal came to an end about as usual.

(We have come now to that part of the play that earns the money. It is best to follow closely here.)

The next day Mrs. King and Lottie had a heart to heart visit. She had come to the girl, I say girl for she was only twenty-two, yet some girls at that figure are mighty old, for her "getting acquainted talk." The dear old soul always had these talks with every one of her boys, as she called us. It was not idle curiosity that prompted her to draw us out. We told her of our past and present. We laid away in her care our plans and hopes for the future. It made us feel better, this mothering of us. I am sure some of us were better men because she believed in us.

They were seated in Lottie's room. The maids were doing the after-dinner work in the kitchen. You could hear the clatter of the dishes and the sound of voices as they talked at their work. The old lady went over to the door and closed it.

"Now we'll have just a nice visit by ourselves. Boys are all right, but there's nothing

like two girls openin' their hearts to one another. You needn't smile—I'm a girl yet—I'm just as young as you are in here and here," she said putting her hand on her head and over her heart.

"You promised to tell me all about your gettin' married. You don't mind to tell me all about it do you?"

The girl sat in the low rocker, her hands folded and her eyes cast down.

"There isn't much to tell and nothing I am ashamed of—at least I thought I was doing what was best. You see, I married Frank Arnold when I was eighteen. I had just graduated from high school and father said I should go to a business college and fit myself to earn something. Instead I ran away and married Frank. He was twenty-five then, and I thought he was one of the nicest boys in our town. When we got back from the wedding trip I telephoned to mother. 'I'm married, Mama,' I said, 'may I come home and see you?' She was just the same to me as ever, but Papa said he would have nothing more to do with me. I had made my own bed and now I could lie in it. He knew Frank Arnold better than I did, and I would see the day when I would wish I had listened to his advice. I have seen that day, Mrs. King, but I thought my father cruel then," and the girl wiped a few tears from her eyes.

"Yes, yes, child, you were just too young

to know what you were doing. What came next?"

"Well, we soon went to housekeeping. It was great fun at first, and while I had never been taught to cook very much, Frank did not seem to mind it when I made a failure of the biscuits and other things I tried. If he had given me time I would have learned, wouldn't I? Then I got pregnant. After that Frank was hateful to me, and I suppose I was the same to him. He would not let me alone, and I fixed up another room for myself. Nearly every night I would hear him coming in, may be at twelve, one or two o'clock. He would go to bed, without coming to ask how I was or anything, and sometimes I cried half the night. I saw him but little except at the few meals he ate at home. He'd rather get his supper down town and spend the evening with the boys, playing pool or something—some said cards, but I never knew. Many of those days and nights I sat at home alone with my thoughts.

"Once I asked him, if he did not care to be with me, why had he married me? Was I to blame for my condition? He said I should have known better than to get that way. I asked him what he did out every night. He said it was none of my business what he did; he wanted me to distinctly understand that I had no right to question his movements. A few days after that some of my girl friends brought me the information that Frank had been seen out joy-riding with a party, the wom-

en of which were of more or less questionable repute. When I accused him of it he was mad all through. He called me a jealous fool and slapped me in the face. I have heard of wives that love their husbands all the more when beaten by them, but with that blow all my love for Frank Arnold was killed. I cried myself sick over it, and had it not been for my mother, and for the thoughts of my unborn baby, I think I would have killed myself, I was so unhappy. Oh, what brutes men are, I thought. All they want of a wife is to satisfy their lusts. Frank even told me he was a fool to marry—the single men were the ones that had the good times."

"How dreadful, how dreadful!" the old lady commented. "Poor child," she said as she drew her chair closer and stroked the girl's hand.

"Do you want to hear the rest of it?" Lottie asked.

"Yes, yes, go on. When you are done, I will tell you a little story myself."

"As I said, I never could have lived but for my mother. She came to see me nearly every day. She said Frank would be different after the baby was born. I thought, yes, he will be different until another is coming then it will be the same story over again. What hope has a wife with such a husband, and what courage to bring a family into the world? I did not care what happened. Along toward the last I was sick in bed, and I had some kind

of convulsions. When the baby was born, it was dead. The doctor said Frank had some disease. He told Mother this privately, but she told me. When they told Frank the baby was dead, he did not seem to care in the least. I am glad now myself, but when I saw the poor little thing, so cute and innocent lying there cold and dead, I thought my heart would break.

"When I got well, I went to see a lawyer, and applied for a divorce. As soon as I did this Frank left the house and never came back. After a long wait the case came up and the lawyer got me two thousand dollars alimony and Frank did not appear to oppose the suit. His father is well to do and they paid it without delay. The doctor told the judge what I had been through and some girl friends testified about the way Frank had acted. The divorce was granted in a very few minutes. It seems ages ago—that year with Frank Arnold. I have stopped thinking about it now, but I could not see where I had been to blame. I was just a foolish kid, and my father said my good looks was my ruin. But I am not ruined, am I, Mrs. King? I just made a mistake, that is all. I hope I'll never marry again. It seems now days as if men looked upon marriage as a choice between a legal prostitute and the kind money will buy. I heard some women talking on the train as I came here. One of them said, 'What has he got me for if

he can't support me as I want to be supported. I was better off at home with my folks.' The other said, 'Sure, you can get plenty of men with money. If I had your looks I would not take much from him, I can tell you.'

"Dear me, I thought, is the whole world fighting and struggling with this marriage thing? Are men only buying and women selling themselves to the highest bidder? Is there no such thing as love between the sexes? Has it come to be merely a traffic in passion and lust? Do wives soon tire of husbands and husbands of wives? When this comes is love dead? When I came out of school my head was full of ideals and my heart of passion. I dreamed of a home and love. I pictured my children and wanted them. I never thought the world was like this. It took me nearly five years to get over the shock of parting with my illusions. I am not sure I am free from all of them yet,—I am just a bit hardened now and a little bitter too may be. Still I am going to do something and be something yet. I've tasted of experience and it was not pleasant. What I thought would be sweet, turned out bitter. Now Mrs. King, that's all my story. Do you see any hope for me?" and the girl smiled through her tears.

The old lady smoothed the apron over her knees and said, "Yes, dear child, you have all the world before you. You are just at life's threshold. What you have been through seems hard, but others have seen worse. You feel

wronged and sore, but others have had greater injustice and greater wrongs to bear. You are just now a bit down on men, but, land sakes, let me tell you child, you just can't judge 'em all by the sample you happened to get an' the few others you hear about. There's some pesky bad men, and some just as bad women, but the old world is full of good ones, both sexes. What you and me, and other folks, has got to do is to find out the good ones and let the other kind alone. I ain't sayin' a woman would want to marry every man she meets. Even the best of 'em has got some weak points. I suspect all of us has got some failin's. Now there's Ezra—we've been married goin' on sixty years. It don't seem such a long time ago he used to come courtin' around our house. My father used to say Ezra King had likely parts, even for a young wheelwright, an' I guess Ezra had the pick of the girls in our old home town."

A kind of far away look came into the old lady's eyes as she called out of memory the days of her youth. The girl said nothing.

"Well, when Ezra asked me, I was glad 'cause I wanted him. In those days girls were educated mostly to do useful work. My mother told Ezra he was gettin' as good a housekeeper as there was to be found. I could make, I will say myself without boastin,' as good biscuits then as I can now. But, dear me, now days girls don't think housekeepin' amounts to anything. They want a full set of

servants to come along with the marriage license. 'Stead of helping their mothers, as I used to, they expect the mothers to wait on them, unless parents can hire someone to do it.

"But I'm gettin' off my story. Let's see,—oh, yes, we soon fixed a place for ourselves, and our wedding journey was from my father's house to one of our own. My mother used to say, 'There ain't no roof big enough to cover two families' an' I ain't disputin' her word none yet. We had a little house first down by the wagon shop. It cost us four dollars a month rent. Ezra gave me ten dollars to buy our dishes and kitchen fixin's and, my! what an outfit we had! I was only eighteen—just the same as you—and my first baby came inside a year. I had four that's living and two that's dead. I've got now, let me see,—twelve grandchildren, some of 'em as old as you be. Well, as I was a sayin' we went to housekeeping down by the wagon shop. It wasn't more 'n half a block away, and sometimes Ezra would come to the door and wave his hand to me where I'd be sittin' by the window with my sewin' work or somethin.' When I'd see his big shoulders and the apron swingin' in his hand, I'd say to myself, that's my Ezra, and I was proud of him. I've been proud of him ever since.

"By and by when I got nearer the time for the baby I was ashamed to go out—you know how women feel about such things—he'd say,

'What's the difference? 'Tain't nothin' we need be ashamed of.' I do believe Ezra was prouder of me them times than any other. But I would not get out much 'cept at dusk, we'd go walking down the river road, where we most likely wouldn't meet anyone. Ezra would be just as tender and courtin' like and, land sakes! I don't say we was different from other folks, but one thing Ezra never went traipsin' around after other women then or any time.

"We had too much to do, tendin' the children and gettin' a start in the world to think about bein' tired of one another. May be times has changed, but I have a notion folks is about the same as they always was. Of course I know there's a difference somehow 'twixt men and women—just about the same difference as between the critters of the field; but men are supposed to be human and civilized and ought to have some sense of honor and consideration for what a wife is doin' for 'em when she bears 'em a child. But that's neither here nor there. It has nothin' to do with my story.

"Well, just as we got nicely started in, an' Ezra had moved us here to begin a shop for himself and we had the four children comin' along, what should happen but the war. Everybody was goin' to the army—there was nothin' but hard times. Ezra wanted to go too, but I said there was plenty that wouldn't leave a widow and four children that could do the

fightin.' So he went to makin' wagons for the government and done very well by it too. Many times some of them big officials from Washington would come up to see him about wagons an' he nearly always brought them up for dinner to show 'em the reasons why he couldn't go to war, meanin' the children and me. I was keepin' help them days and we'd get up a good dinner for 'em. My, how they used to talk and praise things up, but it made Ezra proud to have other men praise his wife. Still I expect if he thought I fancied or cared more for the praise of outsiders than I did for his, we'd had trouble same as some other folks.

"After the war was over we got some considerable well to do. The children grew up an' we gave 'em a good deal better education than we ever had, but I ain't sayin' it has made 'em any happier. Then by and by, these here trust came along an' Ezra couldn't make wagons to sell agin 'em. Soon after this a bank failed and 'most swamped us, but the house was mine and they couldn't touch that. I remember the night Ezra came home after it happened. He kissed me just as he always does, but he was mighty glum. When he told me how things had gone, I said, 'What's the difference, Ezra? We're gettin' old and don't need much—the children are all settled for themselves, so we will get along all right.' Since then I took in boys for boarders to keep the old house from bein' empty and lonesome, and Ezra sees to tinkering about the shop

some, so we can't complain about the way the Lord's dealt with us. It ain't much trouble in this world to be happy if folks don't ask too much to make 'em so, an' most happy marriages comes from both parties not expectin' nor countin' on the other bein' an angel. My notion of what they're callin' eugenics these days is just common sense. If folks will work hard and be honest with one another, there won't be many divorces, an' what there is ought to be anyway.

"Well now, ain't we had a good talk? I feel a mighty sight better now I know all about you an' you know all about Ezra and me. I couldn't get a word out of that brother of yours why you was sort of alone in the world. Now I must trot along an' get the girls started on them riz-biscuits. You never did see such appetites for riz-biscuits as my boys have, 'specially that Sim, an' he ain't nothin' but a bank clerk neither. Cheer up now, my dear. I ain't sorry I broke my rule about women boarders. I've been motherin' boys so long it'll do me good to change for a while."

When the good old soul had gone down to the tasks in the kitchen, Lottie sat by the window and cried. If anyone had asked her why, she could not have told.

(It might be well if in the play we leave her here by the window, for she and the old lady have said their lines. If the lesson has not been carried home by the words of the last scene, our task has failed. Anyway Lottie can

go. There may be someone waiting for her at the stage door with a limousine and a supper engagement.)

I have been away from Mrs. King's boarding House about a year now, trying to take a few steps for myself up that ladder called Success. When I went away Lottie had made herself one of us. She had started in the study of the millinery business expecting to set up for herself.

I rang the old familiar door bell and the good old lady welcomed me heartily. I must stay, while she asked me a thousand questions about myself and how I had been getting along. She could make people talk about themselves the best of any person I ever knew.

As soon as I could get around to it I asked about Lottie.

"For the land sakes! Didn't you know? Why, she went and married Sim. They've been married six months now and live just around the other side of the block. Oh, but they're happy! Sim just worships her, and I guess she about the same as does him. Some of you boys used to call him old Sim—why Sim's only thirty-five, even if he is so bald. He's cashier now at the bank an' Ezra says there ain't no handsomer couple comes to our church. You ought to have been here. The boys had no end of fun with Sim, but he took it all sweet as could be. He said they was all jealous to see him gettin' Lottie away from 'em,

so he could stand it if they could. Now you just make yourself to home, 'cause you got to stay for supper an' I must go and see about them riz-biscuits. The boys will be glad to see you, and so will Ezra. After supper I'll take you 'round to see Lottie an' Sim,'' and the dear old Mrs. King tottered out to the kitchen.

Now, who would have thought that of old Sim?

Sowing and Reaping Wild Oats.

Mr. Charles Gaylord Jennings as the only son of that well-known citizen, Judson Jennings, the leading capitalist of our town. "Old Jud" as his club members called him, had a finger in about every good thing that commercial enterprise offered. His practical hard-headed business sense had made him a recognized leader in business affairs. He made a success of everything he undertook except—rearing a son. "Cholly" Jennings was his father's constant sore spot, especially since he went away to college.

It is not a part of our story to relate the boy's experiences at school and college. He came home from Yale at twenty-four and he brought with him a tremendous record for being a good fellow, also several vicious habits, and the only knowledge he had of money was the art of spending it. His first interview with the "Governor" on reaching home was not especially reassuring.

"Charles," said his father, "what now?" They were seated in the old gentleman's office at the wholesale grocery house, which had been the nester for the Jennings fortune. Judson Jennings still called himself a wholesale gro-

cer, notwithstanding his presidency of one bank, his directorship in several others and his large holdings in several of our growing industrial concerns.

"Well, Dad, it's up to you."

The son knew the great longing of his father's heart, that he might be able and competent to take his natural place at the head of the house of Jennings when the father's time came to surrender it. From numerous signs and stray sentences in his father's letters for a year or more, he realized that the time had come for him to prove himself, and he had come home with that determination firmly fixed. His career at college had not been marked with any special honors or record of great attainment. He had managed to graduate—he had not disgraced himself that anyone knew. He was popular among fellows of like financial standing. He had not worked—he had no decided ambitions and took very little interest in anything unless it might be recognized in his devotion to college athletics. He had also been a party to many quietly conducted, though questionable social affairs with women he would not have cared to introduce to his mother and sisters at home.

Following one of these social affairs "Cholly" had a siege of gonorrhoea which a certain doctor had "cured" for fifty dollars. When this doctor investigated young Jennings' financial connection he wished he had charged him a hundred. This had happened late in the

Freshman year. It was during the Senior year that Charles was an oarsman in a winning crew and while in the practice work he "strained" himself and was laid up with a severe attack of orchitis. He took no part in the boat races that year.

However, he came home in good health, mind and body, as far as any usual observer could judge, and his father welcomed him with questioning hopes and fears. He came home with his marriage plans all made, with a girl of his choice from among the many good girls of our town. The wedding day had been set for October and the two fathers, old Judson Jennings and old James McIntosh, talked it over at the club.

"You see, Jim, that cub of mine hasn't the first idea of what a dollar is worth. It is up to us to teach him—it may be too late, but I am going to try."

"Oh, Charlie is all right. He'll come out well. Carrie thinks everything of him and I guess he does of her. Don't make it too hard on them Judson.

"No, listen to me. I'm going to give him a job—that's all, you understand, a job. If he makes good I'll promote him. If not, I'll fire him."

"Then give him another job next day, eh, Judson?" and Carrie's father chuckled.

Mr. McIntosh knew of many times when telegrams had been received at the Jennings office calling for hurry up funds or the father's

personal presence to get his seemingly ne'er-do-well son out of scrapes here and there in different parts of the country to which touring car or other excursions had taken him.

"Well, I'm going to try once more and if that daughter of yours don't make him settle down and behave himself, attend to business and amount to something, I'll cut him off without a penny—not a penny, by Gad!" and Judson Jennings brought down his fist with a sounding whack upon the table before them.

It was settled however, that Father McIntosh should give Carrie the house fittings and furnishings and Father Jennings should give her a deed to a neat little six room house that would be their first home. Charles already had a car he called his own, and he induced his father to add a garage for it on the back end of the lot. It was quite a come down for them but "love in a cottage" had its redeeming features. Carrie would keep one maid and she felt sure they would get along—on the quiet they knew it was to be a sort of test and they had only to accept it gracefully for the present, looking to the future.

Charles Gaylord Jennings took his "job" as the head of the order department in his father's wholesale grocery concern at one hundred dollars a month.

"I shall expect you to live on that too, you understand. It is four times what I started on and you can do it." said his father. "Every six months I will raise it, if your work shows

you deserve it. This business has got to grow, and if you can't make it increase, I'll hire someone else who can."

So Charlie settled down to business. He was down to the office on time and punched into the clock with the others. He studied hard to increase the sales and reduce expenses. He discovered and reported several small "leaks" and felt a thrill of pleasure when he saw the smile of satisfaction that crept over his father's face. Outwardly the old man appeared to take everything as a matter of course. If things went well he said nothing. When anything went wrong he "raised the devil" as the old bookkeeper expressed it. However, as the Summer went along, everybody said Charlie was making good, but "Old Jud" admitted it to no one except "Old Jim" at the club. Mr. McIntosh told Carrie and Carrie told Charlie, and the boy—smiled.

The wedding day came along. The house had been fitted and furnished handsomely. Carrie had been all the Summer getting together those items of pretty details that every woman of taste feels she must have to be happy, and the wedding gifts added a plenty more. The happy couple had planned a wedding journey in their own car—a few days with stops at points of interest.

"We'll be back inside a week, Dad," the son said. "I can't spare the time or the money for a long trip. I am going after that new territory as soon as we get home."

The old father was immensely pleased with his son's work that Summer, and he kissed the bride and clasped his son's hands with more than his usual show of affection.

About two weeks after the wedding, indeed it followed their return from the trip, Carrie was taken sick. She had dreadful pains about the hips and an almost intolerable burning of the urine. A chill or two sent her to bed and old Dr. Blossom was called to see her.

"Ah, I see, I see," said the dear old doctor. He had been the McIntosh family physician for years and knew Carrie's health history from the cradle. He advised her to stay in bed, gave her soothing medicines, prescribed vaginal douches, hot applications to the abdomen and pelvis and a liberal use of urinary antiseptics.

"What is the matter with her, doctor" was Charlie's anxious question at the door, as the doctor was leaving.

"Just a little bladder inflammation. Often happens in young married folks. Nothing serious, nothing serious. She'll be all right in a few days. Over indulgence, my boy, over indulgence. Don't worry, don't worry," and the old doctor plodded out the gate.

As the doctor predicted, Carrie was about again in a few days, looking a little pale to be sure, but apparently well. She complained still of some pain and was annoyed by a discharge, but these troubles would soon pass away the doctor said. The suspicion that lurk-

ed in the husband's mind was mentioned to no one. He just wondered if her sickness had anything to do with the trouble he had at college, but it could not be. He had been perfectly well now for three years or more. No, it could not be. If the doctor had thought of any such thing he would have said something. He would forget it. Now to business.

After Carrie was quite herself again Charlie went after that new territory. He had been studying salesmanship. A private course by mail taken secretly, had given him many new ideas. He figured he could double the business inside a year. His father had been content to let things drift along, attending to the wants of his regular customers and collecting the bills as they came due. What the Jennings concern needed was new life, new blood. He would inject this new life—he was doing it. He had put the accounting system on a better basis. The orders were filled and delivered more promptly. The city trade had already greatly increased, and two new auto-trucks with "The Judson Jennings Co." boldly lettered on them, went about with loads of goods that told of sales.

He went away on this trip to canvass a field that had been neglected for some years. It took about three weeks to cover it. There was a daily letter to Carrie and daily orders to the house. He added a good list of new names to their accounts. He had with him the salesman who was to look after the territory after

this initial canvass, and he returned glowing with success. His father was pleased and for once admitted it. The old man congratulated himself upon the wisdom of putting the son where he had to show his metal. Charles was a Jennings all right and had good business blood in him. He was evidently going to prove out his heredity. He wished now Carrie would give him a grandson. He wished the name of Jennings might become a fixed institution in the town to which he had himself come as a poor boy.

The car was waiting at the station when Charlie stepped off the train and Carrie was in it to welcome him. It was late afternoon, but he must stop at the office to file a report and attend to some details. He wanted to see his father too.

"Such a confirmed business man, I never saw," she said, after waiting for him half an hour at the office door, during which he had his talk with his father.

"Yes, but Carrie, I'm making good. Dad's as tickled as a boy with a new top. I can see that," and away they spun for the little home.

Two or three days later Dr. Xury T. Lane had an office caller.

"Well, Charlie, how are you?" he said greeting Charles Gaylord Jennings with his usual hearty handshake. Dr. Lane had been long on friendly terms with young Jennings. They belonged to the same club, yet he had

seldom been called upon to attend any of the family professionally.

"Doc, I've come to you as a friend as well as a doctor. I'm up against something and I want to know the truth. Now look at that and tell me what's the matter," he said exposing himself for the doctor's examination. As the doctor made his study of the case, he also did some thinking.

"When did this start?"

"Yesterday."

"Been away from home?"

"Yes, gone three weeks. Returned three days ago.

"Exposed to anything while away?"

"Not on your life!"

"Well, if you want it blunt and straight, you've got an acute case of gonorrhea."

The young man staggered as if struck.

"My God, doctor, you don't mean it."

"I certainly do."

"My wife—my wife has given it to me. I thought I married a good girl—what shall I do? I'll have nothing more to do with her. She has been untrue to me, maybe while I have been away. If not then, before. Oh, these damned deceitful lying women—Oh, my Dad, my poor old, Dad, what will he say?" and Mr. Charles Gaylord Jennings stormed about the office almost beside himself, talking of divorce and other tragedies.

"Not so fast, Charlie," said Dr. Xury when he thought the young man had relieved

his mind a little. "Let us investigate this matter a moment. You have had this trouble before haven't you?"

"Doctor, I will not lie to you. I had something like it at college, but that was three or four years ago, and I was cured of that all right."

"No use to lie to me Charlie, for I know this is not the first attack. I could see that plain enough. Now let me tell you something. It may hurt but it's true. You are the only guilty party to this thing. You gave the disease to your wife. Was she not sick with something soon after you were married?"

"Yes, but Dr. Blossom said it was nothing."

"Well, may be so, but it was then you infected her. She has now given you back your old friends in a more virulent form—she has paid you back in your own coin—and you deserve it. You have just been saying you would have nothing more to do with her. You have talked about a divorce, but what you ought to do would be to crawl all the way home on your hands and knees and beg her forgiveness. Talk about marrying a good girl, why man, what kind of a husband did she get when she married you, with such a disease as this chronic in your system?

"But the doctor said I was all right. What are doctors good for, if we can't depend upon what they say? I asked him if it would be all right for me to marry, and he said it would."

"Yes, I know," said Dr. Lane, "we have learned more about this disease than we used to know. We know now that it is a worse scourge than tuberculosis. It kills more women, most of them innocent women too, than any other sickness. It steals into our homes like a thief in the night, to rob us of our health and happiness. Yet people are so prudish we cannot educate them about it. When the government taught the boys of the Navy to protect themselves against this disease, there was a hue and cry that the officials were encouraging immorality. I leave it to you if it would not be better for such fellows as you to have instruction about this trouble and its prevention than to face what you must because of your wild oats sowing. It will probably make you sterile, if it has not already. Oh, I am giving you the worst side of it I know, yet what about the wife? She may have her peritonitis and pelvic abscesses and have to go on the surgeon's table to save her life, and then may be not save it."

"That is enough doctor. I can't stand any more," the young man cried. "Now give me the best side of it."

"Well, I will treat you and do the best I can. Your wife should have treatment also. It will be a long hard fight and even then no doctor on earth can say positively that you are cured. You will both have to use antiseptic protection or you will go on trading the disease back and forth until you establish a like im-

munity. At best your sex-happiness is nipped in the bud and no one can say what the future may have in store for either of you."

The treatments went along and after a few months both Charlie and Carrie had fairly good health again. The wife was thinner and paler, but except that she tired very easily, she was cheerful and happy. Charles G. Jennings carried his secret.

A year or more went by. Charles was making good. They had saved some money even at the salary first received. By this time it had been advanced to two hundred a month. The old father was very proud and full of hope about his son. The day ending the second year, when they talked about the future, the father said, "Charlie, what is the matter up at your house? I haven't heard about any babies yet. I want a grandson, you understand—a grandson."

"I don't know, Dad, we're both willing but no signs yet," laughed the young man.

"You tell her for me, she'd look far better fondling a baby than that pug she always has with her. Tell her that—you understand?"

That night Charlie repeated his father's words to his wife.

"You may tell Father Jennings I fondle dogs because I haven't anything else. Oh, Charlie, I do want a baby—I've been wanting one all along, but I did not say much about it," and the young wife burst into tears.

"There, there," he said, "it will come out all right. If we can't get one of our own, we can take one."

"No, I want one of my very own."

Several months passed, but no pregnancy occurred. Carrie finally consulted Dr. Blossom again. He said it might be due to acid secretions, or uterine inflammation. He would treat her and see if these things could not be corrected. So the poor girl submitted herself to a long series of treatments—tampons, douches, medicines, tonics, electricity and one thing and another, two or three times a week, going to the doctor's office. The fees counted up but Charlie paid them without a word of protest. Her health was now fairly good, and except for a dragging down feeling she had little complaint to make. Still she did not get pregnant.

Dr. Blossom finally proposed that they call in a surgeon "who did his work" and see what he thought. This worthy authority insisted that she should undergo a curettement. The uterus was enlarged and this operation would restore it to a normal condition. This present state might explain the failure of pregnancy.

Willing to make any sacrifice the young wife went to the hospital. She was operated and put to bed for three weeks. The bill was about one hundred and fifty dollars, hospital fee and all. It was paid of course and cheerfully, but Charlie secretly felt the futility of it all. He had not forgotten Dr. Xury's prediction.

After the operation Carrie's health was again about as usual. She had always been a healthy girl, and only since her marriage had she any health trouble to annoy her. She thought the operation had helped the dragging down feeling, but as months went by no sign of pregnancy was recognized.

"Doctor," said Charlie to Dr. Xury, one day, "is there any way you can determine whose fault it is we don't have any babies at our house?"

"Yes, I can tell if it's your fault," and the doctor explained to him the tests to be made and the manner of making them. A few days later Dr. Xury sat over his microscope studying the specimen Charlie had brought. The young man was waiting breathlessly.

"It is as I feared," the doctor said. "There is not a single protozoon in it. You are absolutely sterile."

Charlie dropped into a chair pale and speechless. He saw all the hopes of a happy family life gone. He would never be a father. The grandson so much wished for by poor old Dad would never come from him. He cursed the folly of his past life. What a penalty to pay for what he thought a harmless lark? What would the future hold for him? For Carrie—for Dad? Getting to his feet finally he went out saying, "Don't tell anybody, Dr. Xury. Don't mention it, will you?"

As the months went along Charlie was tormented with his thoughts. At times he thought

he would tell his wife everything and give her freedom to do what she thought best. He loved her devotedly and could not bear the thought she might turn against him. He could not lose her. What difference did it make anyway? Children are often a care and sorrow. Perhaps if they had a son he would grow up to be a curse instead of a blessing. We are but atoms in the race. Each will run his course and die. It does not matter who reproduces. There are plenty to do this part of the race function. Let us enjoy our lives and make the best we can of them. It is a foolish vanity, this ambition of his father's to keep up the family name and standing. It is like the silly pride of the crowned heads of Europe, to leave plenty of heirs to the throne, often so poorly bred that the children of the peasants are superior to them. He would make a success of himself, of his business and of everything else. Perhaps the sisters would do better and give Dad all the grandchildren he would want.

It was noticeable, however, that Charles G. Jennings had changed. He was no longer the gay fellow that came home from college. He had become a serious, saddened, driving business man. His father, now left practically everything to him. The old man spent less and less time at the office, and more at the club playing chess with old Jim and other cronies. In time the daughters married and gave the old man several grandchildren. Still he could not forgive Carrie for being childless. He said

Charlie is a better business man that he ever was, and other people think so too.

If you had come to our town at this time you would have seen Mrs. Charles Gaylord Jennings driving here and there on errands of mercy and kindness. She was interested in playgrounds, kindergartens for the poor, day nurseries, etc. She had everything that money could buy to make her happy. Her husband has always been devoted and kind, often as loving as a lover, but it palls on her some way. She had many secret tears, when her motherhood promptings overcome her. She had dogs to be sure. A prize bull terrier always rode with her in the car. It was great fun washing and tending him. He was such an intelligent dog.

People used to say she hated babies. She acted as if she could not bear to touch one or in fact to see one. Meeting a mother pushing a rosy-cheeked child down the street in a cab or go-cart made her turn her face away. The truth was she could hardly suppress her tears. She was jealous of mothers then. She said those who had more than they wanted or were able to care for properly were the ones that continued to bring them into the world, but those who wanted them and had means to do well by children could not have any. She said an Allwise Providence had some strange ways of adjusting things.

Dr. Xury attended the girl. She was an orphan, about twenty years old, bright, healthy and American born. When she left the orphanage she worked as a waitress at a hotel. She was just the sort of girl some ardent follower of "the light that lies in woman's eyes" would see and covet. She did not know the world, or its ways. She did not know men or their ways. She had no mother to tell her, and she obeyed the Cosmic urge. She became an illegitimate mother.

The baby was a fine healthy boy. At the hospital Dr. Xury arranged everything. When it was three weeks old the papers were signed transferring the child to him. He promised the mother it should have a good home. She cried bitterly when she looked at the little face for the last time, still she could see no better way to do. She was but a plaything in the hands of Fate.

That night Dr. Xury carried the child away. He had provided a good-sized market basket with a cover and in it he fixed a bed of cotton. On this he laid the child, tucking the little blanket about it, with the nursing bottle at which the little fellow tugged away happily. On a card he wrote in a disguised hand:

> The good Stork leaves Mr. and Mrs. Charles Gaylord Jennings a boy—three weeks old to-day. He is healthy, American born and worthy of your

love. If you do not want him, take him to the Board of Charities.

A. D. T. Special.

It was Sunday night, rainy and dark. The maid was out for her half day off. Carrie was reading in the sitting room. Charlie was visiting for an hour a newly-married sister. His wife had not felt like going out. The door bell rang. She got up wondering who would call at such a time. Upon opening the door she could see no one and thought it strange. Some boys playing pranks, perhaps, she thought. Just as she was about to close the door she heard a strange little noise at her feet, and looking down saw a basket. It moved a little, and for a moment she was frightened. Her curiosity got the better of her fear however, and she caught it up and carried it into the light.

"Well, she's got a baby," said Dr. Xury as he stepped from behind a tree and went to his car waiting around the corner.

Once in the sitting room, off came the cover, and there lay the sweetest, cleanest and dearest of babies one ever saw.

"Oh, you precious, darling thing" Carrie cried, taking it in her arms. She read the ticket fastened to the basket. She looked at the child again, then hugging it to her bosom, she could not keep back the happy tears.

An hour later Charles G. Jennings made his way homeward and opened his door. He was startled by a wife so radiant and smiling,

though tears streamed down her face, he hardly knew her.

"Oh, Charlie, we've got a baby—a baby! It came in a basket—it's ours, Charlie. The card says so. You won't take it away from me, will you? Nobody shall take it away. It's mine. It's ours!" and she hugged the child tightly as if in fear it might disappear as suddenly as it came.

"Bless your heart, Carrie, why didn't you say you wanted a baby. You could have had half a dozen by this time." It was not a nice thing for him to say just at that moment, but he meant well enough.

If you come to our town now, you will see Mrs. Charles Gaylord Jennings driving her husband down in their car. A sturdy little child sits by her side instead of a dog. Oh, yes, they have a dog or two. Baby Judson, now over a year old, likes to play with the pug.

Old Jud sometimes wonders why on earth Carrie would rather adopt a baby than have one of her own. He just can't understand her. Charlie understands her, and they are happy now.

Isn't that Dr. Xury Lane a funny fellow?

Bessie Tompkins' Test.

Not far from the city of London, Ontario, is a little Canadian village, and not far from this village is the home of an honest Canadian farmer. The fifty odd acres had by hard labor and prudent economy enabled him to rear his family respectably. Two sons and three daughters had come to bless Jacob Tompkins and his wife. On week days they were hard at work, but Sunday always found them sitting in a healthy red-faced row at the village church. The Tompkins family were ardent Wesleyan Methodists.

As time went along, the children grew older and the boys graduated from the farm, one as an employee of the Grand Trunk Railway, the other in the lumber industries of the North woods. The eldest daughter married the village hardware merchant and started a little brood or her own. This left Elizabeth and Mary at home.

Then Mrs. Tompkins died. The children comforted the father as best they could, but he went about his tasks a little more saddened and stooped. Getting a living from the farm seemed harder every year. The horses were old and slow. The fences needed the attention of younger and stronger hands. The barns and

other buildings forgot that such a thing as paint existed. The old wagon wheels wabbled and creaked as Farmer Tompkins turned in at his own gate, having made his usual Saturday trip to the village.

"Here's a letter for ye, Bessie," he called as he crawled down from the wagon at the barn door.

The girl hearing his call, dropped her work in the kitchen and came skipping toward the barn. "Oh, good, Daddy," she cried, as pleased as a child. Though Bessie was nineteen, she seemed but a child still, to her father. Taking the letter she scanned the address. "It's from Gertie McDermitt. Let's hurry, Dad, 'cause supper is all ready," and the girl began to assist with putting the horses away.

Presently they carried bundles and packages into the kitchen and sat down to their evening meal. Once Bessie took out the letter and looked at it, but made no movement toward opening it. The old man noticed, but said nothing. When the supper was finished, he moved his chair toward the stove and said, "Read your letter now, Bessie, and see what she says."

The girl took the letter from the bosom of her dress, found the shears in the work basket by the window, cut off the end of the envelope and stood reading. The old father smoked his pipe and watched her as she read. Her face brightened as she took in the meaning of the message, and she cried, "Oh, Dad, Gertie's got

me a good job in Detroit. Read what she says."

"A job, you say?" her father commented, as he found his spectacles and adjusted them. Mary stood with dish and dishcloth, waiting to hear, and the old man read the letter aloud:

Detroit, Mich.

Dear Bessie:—I have found you a good place as cashier in the dining room of the Star Hotel. I work in the office, as you know, so if you will come, we can room together. It pays you $7.00 a week and keep, so it ain't so bad. What they want is a good steady honest girl and Mr. Drew,—he's the boss—he favors country girls. If you want it you must come at once for the other girl is leaving Monday. Soon as you get this you send me a telegram. That is what Mr. Drew says.

Now, Bessie, be sure to come for this is a good chance and you want to take it. I'll be looking for you Monday.

Your friend, Gertie.

Farmer Tompkins folded the letter, put away his spectacles and relighted his pipe. Mary went on with her dishes and Bessie stared at the fire. Not a word was said.

The old man thought of his dead wife. He thought of the boys, and wondered if Mary

would soon be leaving him too. Here he was about at the end of the journey. They had worked hard to bring up their children, then just as they are old enough to be of some help, off they go to shoulder their own burdens and responsibilities—with families, care and duties of their own. There is no place in their lives for an old man. He felt sure his wife might have been with him yet but for her hard work, trying to keep the girls at the village high school, until they had finished. Still he could not blame Bessie if she wanted to make her own way in the world. Most all the decent young men had gone to the larger towns and cities from about there, and the girls would have to follow, he guessed, if they made respectable marriages. All his girls were good looking and knew how to work. How could it be otherwise with the mother they had?

Through the smoke from his pipe he saw the face of his wife, young and happy again, just as she was when they came out to Ontario to get a farm of their own. But now she was dead, and he an old man, a lonely old man without her. As he sat there so silent and thoughtful, he sighed, and a tear stole down his cheek. Mary saw it and went into the pantry to hide her own. Bessie saw it too, and said, "Oh, come now, Dad, I ain't goin' if you don't want me to."

"Well, little daughter, you're the baby, yet I must not forget you're a woman grown and

have a right to a chance. Do ye want to go, Bessie?"

"Yes, Dad, I want to go and I'll tell you why. One's enough at home and Mary's goin' to stay with you. If I get along good, I can send home part of what I earn to help and besides I'll be making my own way."

"All right, Bessie, go and try it. Ye know where home is, and that ye got a home to come to if ye need it."

Then they sat in silence and the old man smoked. When the little old clock on the shelf struck nine, the father arose, stretched his arms and started for bed. At the door of his room he paused. "Ye better take that early train in the mornin', Bessie, even though it be Sunday. So get your things ready."

That settled it beyond question. The old clock was nearly ready to strike for midnight when the sisters got to bed. The trunk had been packed, the new suit laid out for the journey and every detail that a young woman considers important had been attended to. Yet Bessie could not sleep. Her mind was full of her coming experience. When toward morning, she did surrender to the demands of nature, she dreamed of roaring railroad trains and rushing crowds of people.

At the station the old man kissed his daughter good bye. "Bessie," he said, "ye're goin' out into the world and it's hard. Ye're good now and I want ye to stay good. If trouble and temptation comes, remember your mother

and me. Don't ever come home if ye can't come as good as ye're leavin' now. We'll expect ye every Christmas time anyway an' if ye don't come, I'll—I'll know ye ain't good any more—so there ye have it. Good bye, Bessie."

"Good bye, Dad, I'll be good and I'll be home."

When the train pulled out, the girl saw her father rumbling down the road toward home, with his old team and wagon, his bent form outlined against the light beyond.

"Poor old Dad, I will be good," she said to herself.

The new cashier at the Star Hotel restaurant was what the boys on the road called "a good looker." Her round healthy face had a smile for everybody. Any girl with good looks and a smile will have plenty of friends. Bessie seemed to attract them without effort. She had a kind of innocent freshness, yet so intelligent and keen that people liked to know her. Many a fat veteran of the road would say,, "Keep the change, keep the change!" and Bessie on seven dollars a week could not appreciate the evils of tipping. She told Gertie, who warned her not to let "any of them guys get too fresh," that she was going to be a good fellow to everybody; that she thought a girl had no need to make herself a grouch in self protection.

Often one or several, if the place was crowded during the rush hour, would gather about her desk to chat. Some would hand her a flower, others would share the chewing gum and occasionally a box of chocolates would be slipped through the window of her cage.

"Do you ever get out of this cage?" asked Perry Winters. Perry was a regular and always had a ticket to punch. He had a place of some kind with a bank, messenger or something. Bessie never knew just what his position was, though he seemed to have plenty of money to spend.

"You make me think of a nice little canary bird. Can't you chirp us a little tune?"

"No, I am no canary bird. May be I am a hawk and I might scratch your eyes out," laughed Bessie.

The Holiday time came and Bessie made her first visit home. The children and grandchildren were all there. The old man sat at the head of the table and said the grace. He thanked the Lord for his children. He prayed they might all be spared to meet around that family table another year. "Keep us," he prayed, "as it were, in the hollow of Thy hand, and if so be Thy will any of us are called to go, make us ready to meet those waitin' on the other side."

It all seemed so sad and morbid—all the time thinking and talking about death. She wondered why old people have to bring in this

subject on every occasion. She only stayed two days at home. It seemed rather dull and small. It was good to be back again in her cage at the restaurant. At parting with her father, she said, "I'll be home this Summer, Dad, and next Christmas too. I'm still good and you need not worry, Dad."

Winter passed and the Summer came. Detroit in Summer is always happy. There is so much to do and to see and so many places to go. The girls at the Star Hotel were at liberty at eight o'clock in the evening and Bessie often joined Gertie and others for their outings. There was dancing at Belle Isle Park, and at the Amusement Parks up and down the river. Summer garden theatres and many other so-called places of innocent amusement received their attention. Sometimes they went with young men by appointment. Other times the girls went alone, depending upon "catching fellers" for dancing partners. Bessie did not quite approve of this plan, but the other girls seemed to think it was all right, so she made no protest. She could not stay cooped up in "that stuffy old hotel" all day and all night.

At first she had been sending home fifteen dollars a month from her wages, but as Summer came along she seemed to need so many new things to "look decent"—and seven dollars a week does not go very far—that the monthly home lift did not go. At the parks and theatres, she saw other women and observed their

hats, jewelry and dresses. She often sighed and wished she were rich instead of just a seven dollar a week restaurant cashier.

"Say, kid," said Perry Winters, one day. We're getting up a little auto party for Sunday night. There'll be three couples and I want you to go with me. You'll be off Sunday afternoon, so we can start early. We will run out around Mt. Clemens, and stop at Wesley's Road House for supper and get home by eleven or twelve. Gertie's going with Bob, then there's Bill Smith and his girl. What do you say, Bessie?"

"I'll think it over, Perry and let you know tomorrow. Very nice of you to ask me," and Bessie reached for the next ticket to punch.

She talked with Gertie about the trip, and was urged to accept. She had seen Billy Smith with Bob and Perry but had never liked his manner or looks very well. However, they would, go. Girls on seven dollars a week can't afford to be too particular, if they want to have any good times at all.

The merry party in the big touring car started early. The machine went purring along the smooth roads. It was an ideal June afternoon. As they spun along the North River road, the setting sun glinted across the water of some inlet here and there as they passed. On the other side they caught glimpses of the big steamers going or coming, with the black smoke trailing out behind, sharply outlined against the blue of the water and the sky.

"That's St. Clair Flats off up there," said Perry. "We'll take that in some time this Summer, Bess," and Perry seemed settled in the intention of making himself a permanent escort for the pretty cashier. The young man was driving the car with skill and caution. As he brought the big machine whirling along its way, the girl could not help feeling a thrill of admiration as she sat by his side. "What a grand world it is," she thought. "Oh, why are so many of us poor, and why so few to have all the good things?" She thought of her father and his wobbly old wagon. She asked herself, What's the use? What's the gain? People that have things are the ones who go on and get them. There is no virtue in rusting out in some isolated corner of the world, thinking you are worthy and godly. For her part, she wanted to be among those who know things and do things—not the humdrum tasks, but the things of an interesting life of change and variety. Even the thrill of danger and the risk of disaster made it worth while.

She saw her philosophy of life that day in the way Perry handled the car. She saw that their very speed had in it the elements of safety. She had heard someone say it was the cautious drivers that had all the accidents. Once as they spun along they took a railroad crossing with but a second or two margin. The fireman on the locomotive put his head out the cab window and yelled something that Perry said sounded like calling them damn

fools. "A miss is as good as a mile," he quoted.

Then Billy Smith added, "The man who hesitates is lost—when driving a car or making love to a girl!"

"Just the same, please don't take any more such risks again," urged Bessie.

"All right, kid, you're it," the young man replied.

They reached the road house about eight o'clock, and, though they had telephoned ahead for a private dining room, they had some time to wait before the dinner was served. The girls retired to the dressing room, to adjust themselves, while the boys smoked under the wide piazza that surrounded the big place. Bessie finished her hair and started to join the boys outside before the other girls were ready. As she came around the corner she saw the three heads close together in the shadow, and she drew back a moment to listen. They whispered too low for her to hear, but she was sure Billy Smith said something about the "K.D." but just then the other girls came.

"Here's Bessie eavesdropping," said Gertie.

"Yes, I heard Mr. Smith say something about K.D. What is K. D. Billy?"

Each young man looked at the other, and wondered what reply to make. Billy Smith came to the rescue. "Why that is our way of speaking of the Independent Order of the Knights of Darkness," laughed Billy. "We were planning to initiate a bunch of new mem-

bers.'' Then they all laughed loudly as they gathered about the table.

For a moment the incident made Bessie quiet and thoughtful, but the dinner was served so nicely and so well cooked, that she soon entered into the spirit of the merry party. They told stories, and recited toasts, some a little suggestive and a bit off color, but decidedly funny. Perry was a perfect mimic and a good actor. They had a song or two from the boys, some bits of parody nicely fixed to serve for the occasion. It was a jolly party.

When the wine came on Bessie hardly knew what to do. She had never tasted wine in her life. She sipped a little but did not like the taste of it. The others filled again, and the boys urged her to ''Come on and be a good sport.'' The girl wished she was in her little room at the hotel. She managed, however, to get down about half her glass, after repeated sips.

By and by, when the dinner was finished, Billy Smith, who claimed the honor of being chairman of the house, arose and said, ''Now, ladies and gentlemen, the Captain of the Mystic Crew orders each gentleman to escort his lady through the labyrinth of the Castle of Wonders and to show her all the secret passages, haunted chambers, also the relics of past ages. The Dragon is chained in No. 13, but beware of his fiery breath. Noble Knights, advance!''

At this the young folks arose and the curtains pulled aside, revealed a long hall with

many colored lights, dim and weird, the effect of which was emphasized by mirrors cunningly set. At the doorway marked "No. 13" they paused to look in. There they saw, coming, as it appeared, from the mouth of a great cave a monster green dragon. Its eyes blinked fire, and the hideous mouth hissed flame—or seemed to—the whole scene illuminated by lights so dim that shadows danced and flickered to confuse and startle the beholder. The girls screamed a little.

"Silence," said Billy. "The Imps of Darkness demand silence."

So they went on from one surprise to another. They saw devils dancing in the fire. They looked upon a naked Eve holding an animated conversation with the Serpent. They met Cupid and Psyche glowing in shocking nudity. They saw also the Centaurs of the wood, making love. There were many specimens of fine art, exhibited for art's sake, but the city police department had no jurisdiction. The road house was outside the limits.

Bessie never remembered all she saw. Things began to get hazy before long and she said, "Oh, Perry, I'm feeling funny. I believe I'm—I'm going to faint."

Perry helped her into a little room off the "Mysterious Castle of Wonders," and laid her on a couch. The other two couples had disappeared.

"Perry bring me something—a dish—a pail —anything," cried the girl holding her hand-

kerchief over her mouth. In an alcove stood a bed and near it a stand with a wash bowl and pitcher. Perry brought the wash bowl.

"Oh, Perry, I'm so ashamed," she finally gasped.

"It's a shame to lose all that good dinner," Perry commented.

"I'm so sick, Perry, take me home."

"You'll feel better presently, kid. We can't go till the others are ready."

Bessie lay there on the couch thinking. She began to understand. She trembled a little as she wondered what was best to do. She knew the wine had been drugged and she felt sure she knew for what purpose.

"If you don't mind I'll shut my eyes a little," she said with a wan smile. Perry sat in a chair by her side holding her hand. He was a bit frightened. The K.D. had not worked just as Billy said it would. By and by the girl began to talk as if in a dream.

"Yes, Dad—I'm home again—I'm still a good girl too, Dad. You said—you said I could not come home if I did not stay good. It was hard—hard—just as you said it would be, Dad —hard for poor girls. They take us—take us for a good time—they don't call it a good time —except—except to make us bad. Oh, Dad, I want to stay home now—it's work—work, anyway for poor folks, no matter where you are. Don't let me go back, Dad, 'cause I'm good now. Don't Dad, don't—don't—don't!"

Perry was shaking her by the shoulders. He had sent for a glass of milk. "Here wake up, Bessie and drink this. Don't you worry nobody's going to hurt you. You'll be all right soon."

After an hour or so, they went out on the piazza. There Perry talked. The girl had but little to say. Presently the others joined them. The two girls staggered a little, but somehow they were bundled into the car and away the party went for the city. It was almost morning when they arrived.

"You can tell the Boss, we got stalled, and could not get here sooner," said Billy Smith as they parted.

Bessie was at her post as usual, but her smile was wanting. Gertie did not appear, sending word that she had a bad headache.

"Hello, Perry, how are the Knights of Darkness?" This was Billy Smith's greeting when the boys met next day.

"I'm sorry we tried that game on those girls. Bessie is a good straight girl. I'm done with that sort of thing, Billy," said Perry.

"Oh, hell, what do those hashers expect? Do they think we blow our money on biscuit shooters for nothing?"

"Well, count me out, I say. I've learned a lesson—I've had enough," and Perry looked his friend squarely in the eye.

"You must be hard hit, Perry, eh? Maybe we'll be getting an invite to a wedding."

"I could do worse than to marry Bessie Tompkins, I can tell you that," and Perry turned on his heel to walk away.

The Summer wore away and the girl in the cashier's cage at the Star Hotel restaurant was moulting her illusions. Of all those who had sought her friendship was there one she could trust and depend upon? What did it all amount to? Week in and week out, the same routine. She had used her salary to buy what she thought she needed. She could then go the rounds and wear out the things she had bought and after that repeat the process. She thought of the folks at home—the same dreary outlook faced her there. What did life amount to anyway, especially for poor people? She wondered if there were any really happy persons in the world. She read in the paper one day about a poor girl who had thrown herself into the river and found a watery grave and peace. She did not blame the girl. She even wished she had the courage to do the same thing herself. Bessie Tompkins surely had the blues.

Perry tried to be friendly; hoped she felt none the worse for their trip; sorry it had turned out as it did. "You know, kid," he said, getting confidential, "I am through with that bunch. I'm going to do what you'd like to have me, Bessie—I mean it."

Bessie only smiled. There were more tickets to punch just then, and Perry passed out.

"Mr. Drew," said Bessie one day, "I've been here a year now and I guess I'll go home. There is nothing in it. What's seven dollars a week and meals, also a little room to sleep in? It's a living, yes, but we can get that out on the farm. It gets on my nerves to be poor in a city. I don't mind it out there. You can find plenty to take my place. I think I'll go home."

"What's wrong, Miss Tompkins? Hitting me for a raise? Well, I'll make it ten dollars a week, if you'll stay. You suit me and I'd rather not change. What do you say?"

"No, I am not bluffing you for more money. Ten dollars is better than seven—just three dollars better in fact, three dollars to spend or save. In about a thousand years I could save enough to count. Inside a thousand years, I'll be dead. No, I'm blue and homesick. Let me go home to my Dad."

"All right girl, take a vacation anyway. Maybe you will be ready to come back after you've been there a month. I used to feel that way myself, but I got over it. I'll hold your place for you."

So Bessie packed her trunk again. "What have I to show for my year's work?" she asked herself. "Well, here's four pair of silk stockings somewhat worn—need darning at the heels—two pair of high heeled shoes, a little lop-sided, one voile skirt and one picture hat, also a small bundle of unpleasant memories, and a list of risky experiences wherein I came

near compromising myself. I have also a well established bump of discontent in my head. Maybe life is worth more treading the pavements, but just now I'd rather go up in the cow pasture and sit under a tree. I've tasted of life, yes, I've had several proposals, one for marriage—the others for something else—I'm highly honored and highly favored, still I've got a bad taste in my mouth. I'm going home to Dad, while I can, for I'm still good. I'm going back where robins build nests and folks can be trusted because they're honest. I'd rather be the wife of a good clod-hopper, than the legal doll of a swell rascal. Yes, Dad, I'm coming. I had a letter today from John."

Bessie's soliloquy was interrupted here we regret to say for she had more practical thoughts coming. It was Mr. Drew. He paid her the last week's salary and added fifty dollars "as a slight token for a year of faithful and honest service," he said.

"Are you sure it is not a bait to have me come back, Mr. Drew?" Bessie asked.

Near the city of London, Ontario, is a little Canadian village, and not far from this village is the home of an honest Canadian farmer. An old man sits by the fire smoking his pipe. He don't work any more now—he's too old—and Mrs. Parkins—that's Bessie—says Dad don't need to work. John Parkins says so too and what John says, goes.

Bessie also says Dad's lots of help tending the baby. The old man smiles when people call John a good farmer—don't the old place, the new house and the barns all fixed over and painted red, show it? The old man still calls his Bessie a good girl and insists that the baby looks just as she used to.

The little old clock on the shelf strikes seven, and Mary has just finished the dishes.

The Biophoretic Healer.

PARIS, April 9.—"My discovery, mycolysine, which I am confident will greatly prolong human life and revolutionize the practice of medicine, is available to duly authenticated American physicians for test and experiment if they apply to me through the American Embassy."

In these words Dr. Eugene Louis Doyen, a famous physician and surgeon outlined the manner in which physicians in America can test for themselves the substantiality of the claims Dr. Doyen made for his new "elixir of life" in a paper he read before the medical congress at Monaco recently.—Newspaper Clipping.

The old Chase residence had been long vacant. Standing as it did facing a busy thoroughfare in one of the older residence districts, people wondered at its continued unoccupancy. Perhaps its very massiveness, its colonial grandeur both of interior and exterior, made it quite out of harmony with the average tenants' needs and requirements. To one entering its wide doorway, the walls seemed to moan out a sad history of past owners—families scattered and lost in the whirlpools of modern life, or perchance dead and sleeping in the peace of the grave. A cold and tomblike at-

mosphere filled the stately halls, and one might fancy admonitions of "Silence" would meet him at every turn. A prospective tenant usually went away with a peculiar shiver creeping over the spine. Though suave agents talked glowingly of the possibilities of the place, for some reason the Chase place long remained tenantless.

The surprise and evident curiosity of the neighborhood can be well imagined, when workmen of every craft appeared, and with energy and dispatch, remodeled, renewed and refitted the whole premises, changing in surprisingly short order the neglected aspect of the place. Presently also, vans came bringing furniture and fittings and the whole place assumed an air of brisk activity.

Adjacent window hangings carefully screened many curious onlookers, who saw a stout little man of foreign type, everywhere manifest as the authority in the work at hand. Who the newcomers were still remained a mystery.

Not that people, as a rule in large cities, care to know their neighbors, yet who could make use of the old Chase property, was a question of some moment, especially to the ladies of the vicinity. Within a day or two a sign appeared before the gate, gold lettered and hung with grotesque iron fittings. It read:

DR. A. SCHMOLDT
Biophoretic Healer.

A liveried footman paced up and down the walk or loitered in the entryway, ready to wait upon actual or prospective callers. True he had little to do at first, but as an advertisement he served a good purpose, and there came a time when he was a very busy man.

People saw and wondered. They saw first, then they came and last were conquered, disturbing the ancient order of the Roman's message. Many consulted their dictionaries to determine the nature of this new healing art. Light on "Biophoretic" healing was hard to find, but most concluded it meant something good—appearances so indicated at least.

Curiosity is said to be a leading trait of the feminine mind, and curiosity was working in behalf of Dr. A. Schmoldt. In a few days it had something tangible to work upon in the shape of beautifully engraved invitations to attend "my Thursday afternoon lectures on Health". With the invitation was enclosed a neatly printed circular entitled: "Biophoretic Healing." It was this circular that did the business.

This circular said in part, "Death is unnatural and unnecessary" which was a startling statement. Nearly everybody expects to die sooner or later, hence to be told that it is both unnatural and unnecessary, could not fail to stimulate our interest. Of all the unnecessary things we do, dying is the least attractive.

"Death did not belong in the original plan of the Creator—it was acquired by the race.

We have still forms of life in our tropical seas that never die; that still retain the original life power," continued the circular. Mrs. Leopold DeVinne asked old Dr. Blake if this was true, He so assured her—Blake knew, for he is professor of biology at the university and he explained about the oemeba, etc.

"The human body today contains remnants of the original immortal cells—the true Germ cells. We have to die because the somatic cell or body cell predominates. This predomination increases connective tissue. The office of the biophors is to feed the germ cells, but so long as the somatic type holds sway, this vital food cannot be produced in the body. If enough biophors are produced to regenerate the race through the process of reproduction, and continue from one generation to another, Nature has done her best. There is, however, a constantly declining power as is evidenced by the increase of disease and a gradual shortening of the average life period. Do not be deceived by reports to the contrary, the race is growing shorter lived every century.

"Now science steps forward to do for the race what nature cannot. Science has analyzed the biophor and reproduced it. This vital food substance is now administered in an assimilatable form. It dissolves the excessive connective tissue elements of the body, and slowly but surely restores health and youth. Eventually it will bring the race, if accepted and used, to a condition not unlike that of the

primitive man, fresh from the hand of his Maker. Life will be thus almost indefinitely lengthened and if administered in the earliest years an Earthly immortality is not unreasonable to expect nor is it unattainable.'' This and much more the circular said.

''How grand! How wonderful!'' was the exclamation of many a fair reader, some of whom felt the weight of years and avoirdupois also. Mrs. DeVinne read the circular several times. She was much interested and wondered if by this treatment she could rid herself of about one hundred pounds of excess flesh.

Dr. Schmoldt's advertising made plain that the seats for the Thursday afternoon lectures could be secured only by appointment and would be limited strictly to forty. Not a mortal above this number would be admitted. Names of patronesses for assigned seats were given and it was soon evident that great exclusiveness would characterize Dr. Schmoldt's service. While it did not say so, it carried the impression that only people of wealth need apply.

Those attending one lecture soon spread the good news and admission tickets were eagerly sought for. Offering to a needy and a dying race, as did this learned doctor, a means of regaining youth and health, perhaps beauty along with it, pointing out the way without charge, was surely a commendable thing. Offering also, his medical skill to those who chose to employ it, at reasonable fees, which might

give him some slight return for the many years of plodding labor in the great laboratories of Europe, could not be criticised. He surely deserved some consideration for all this effort, which led up to the discovery of the artificial biophor, the greatest scientific achievement of the age!

It was along this line the doctor spoke at the close of his opening lecture, using a marked German adaptation of the English, and effective withal. He seemed to have forty enchanted listeners, mostly ladies, though here and there could be seen an anemic coupon cutter. He especially mentioned his morning and afternoon office hours, should any one care to consult him. At the close of the lecture uniformed pages handed out more circulars with titles such as "True Selfhood," "Health and Will Power," "Mind and Disease," "The True Story of the Biophoretic Elixir," etc.

Dr. Schmoldt and his "Biophoretic Elixir" became the object of much talk in many homes. The healer was discussed in many clubs and circles. True testimony in favor of his powers was still wanting, but none could say aught against his claims. Prof. Blake with his patronizing smile said, theoretically it was all scientific.

In time ladies, now one, now two, here and there confessed to be taking or to have been taking treatments from the new healer. They were given, they said "very beautiful medicine", also certain massage, baths and elec-

trical treatment at the healer's parlors. This treatment was necessary they were told, to secure an equal distribution of the great Elixir throughout the tissues. This was what the good doctor said at least. It was "woefully expensive", yet few regretted the price, especially if it brought results. However, the attention was perfect and everything so elegant.

One lady confessed she felt ten years younger after one month's treatment. Another had been reduced twenty pounds in weight in an equal time. Thus it came about that the footman before Dr. Schmoldt's door became a very busy man.

In the midst of this era of prosperity let us meet personally the now renowned, locally at least, Dr. Aaron Schmoldt. A German of the typical cast, fifty odd years of age, short and stout, but with the glow of youth on his cheek, which he said was due to the use of biophors, but we have seen other healthy German citizens who never heard of the "Elixir of Life." Trained in one of the great universities of his fatherland as a chemist, he was a doctor all right but not of medicine. His degree was that of doctor of pharmacy. Since leaving college he had spent his spare time and spare money in chemical experiments. He was one of many about to make a great discovery. With the usual fortitude of his race he had seen himself growing old with nothing achieved. He had dwelt upon the problem of pre-

venting the increase of connective tissue in the human body. Failure had always met him more than half way. He thought of Schale, Hoppe-Seyler and the many martyrs of science and toiled on. Poverty came close and made him taste of the bitterness of life.

At last he learned from others with whom he came into professional contact, how easy it was to separate the rich Americans from their money. He knew of Prof. Lorenz and heard of the fabulous fees a certain beef packer had paid him. He too, would go to America and have a hand in this money getting game. The remaining part of the story of his evolution need not be told. A few months as a prescription clerk in a drug store, with study of English, a prudent saving of wages to add to his former capital and we have brought the story to his advent as a healer.

Now a swelling bank account, a growing patronage, and a clear sky for the future put our scientific devotee in a very good frame of mind. The office girl claimed she heard him humming an old Germon love song, but however that may be he was very pleasant and very gracious.

He had a laboratory and visitors were often shown into this sanctum sanctorum where the great Elixir was made, and the experiments carried on to test its power. We must not misjudge the good man for he really expected some day to discover the real biophor. He often worked on his experiments into the late hours of night. We might think it worth

while to criticise him for premature claims, but other doctors have been likewise guilty. Dr. Schmoldt had one good excuse—he needed the money. He would lay tribute on those who had plenty, and using it for such a worthy end as original pharmacological research would more than offset the question of "taint." "Tainted money" is no uncommon thing in America.

Sometimes he indulged in speculation as to what would happen if he really did discover a connective tissue solvent. He wondered what fees he might collect for restoring such stiffened up old politicians as the Hon. Joseph Cannon to the full elasticity of youth. He felt sure a certain John D. Rockefeller would give at least a million to be made young again. What a field the ex-actress stars would make! How cheerfully the great bankers would part with their coin to feel again the thrills of boyhood. He would not hesitate to be young again himself. Memories of youth came crowding into his mind, memories of a sweetheart he had lost because too poor to marry. Ah, it would be a glorious achievement!

From such pleasant thoughts as these Dr. Schmoldt was summoned one day to one of the treatment rooms where the ponderous bulk of Mrs. Leopold DeVinne lay upon the treatment table. She was in a bad humor evidently. Several months of the treatment had not reduced her weight an ounce. She had ordered the lady attendant to call the doctor.

"Vel, vat is et?"

"Dr. Schmoldt," she said, sitting upright on the table, her massage gown covering her massive legs, "I believe you and your old treatment is all humbug. You promised to make me thin. I am fatter than ever. You said I would be young, but I feel utterly old today. I have paid you hundreds of dollars, and all told my friends have paid you thousands of dollars, but I do not believe you have done any of us a cent's worth of good."

"Vy, vy, my gut lady," the doctor began, "you make already too much demper. You do not the Biophor understand. Let me make him to you plain."

Then followed a long scientific explanation in which many technical terms of several languages were used, still the good lady seemed dissatisfied. When she had prepared herself for the street, Dr. Schmoldt bowed her out with great politeness.

"Poof!" he said elevating his shoulders, and went back to his laboratory.

A few days later the doctor had a caller. The card brought in to him gave no information other than the name, but he noticed the letters M. D. following it.

"I am one of the committee on credentials for the Medical Society. We do not find your license registered, doctor, and wondered why you had neglected to comply with the law." The caller looked at the great healer for a moment closely.

"Perhaps you are not aware that this is necessary. Will you let me inspect your credentials?"

"I haf no license. I do not practise medicine. Dis is a massage parlor," said the healer.

"You use medicine do you not?"

"I some time prescribe a tonic. I am a pharmacist. Dere is my diploma. I do not use medicine like a doctor."

"What does this mean, where you describe a certain Elixir?" asked the caller, pulling a circular from his pocket.

"I import dat Elixir from Paree—I furnish it just the same as the druggist."

"Why do you use the title Doctor if you are not an M. D.?"

"Vel, I am a doctor all right—for reasons of business I need not say what kind of a doctor, —vat?"

"Well, I will file my report, and I feel sure you will hear from this matter again soon. Good day."

"Very glad to met you, gut day, doktor," said the healer.

"Got in himmel," said the now alarmed Schmoldt," I wonder vat troubles he makes."

Immediately he left the house to consult his attorney.

The next day the old Chase residence was again for rent. The healer had disappeared. Officers found the house empty. During the night vans had again carried the furniture and

fittings to unknown vaults. The bank account was withdrawn at the opening hour and Dr. A. Schmoldt passed into the memory of things that disappoint and hopes that are vain.

Some of the ladies discussed the matter at the Women's Club.

"It's a pity these doctors have to run everything," one said.

"There is no such thing as medical freedom," said another. "If I want to pay Dr. Schmoldt or anybody else for treating me, that is my business and no affair of the Medical Society."

"I see Dr. Schmoldt has migrated," said Prof. Blake to Mrs. DeVinne.

"Yes, the old fraud."

"Oh, well I did like his theory very much. We may hear from him again. Who knows? Who knows? Wonderful theory," and the old professor moved off toward his classroom.

Susan Hillis—Theoretical Mother.

Society in that little Southern town was surprisingly elite—even punctilious. Susie Marvin—Susie is the youthful name for Susan, as you know, yet Mrs. Marvin always used the adult name for the more tender cognomen when she wished to be emphatic—Susan Marvin I commenced to say, was one of the leaders if not the leader of Harpersburg society, at least for her particular generation. There had been other leaders before her of course—her own mother for instance—but Susie had been child, maiden and woman—she had been born, budded and came out naturally it seemed to set the pace for Harpersburg.

At twenty she had many admirers, also among whom were a few very persistent ones. This could not be otherwise for Susan was bright, witty and energetic. She had too, what people call beauty. Any healthy American girl is beautiful for that matter, but Miss Susan Marvin, with her blue eyes, pink cheeks, light wavy hair, plump figure and sprightly manner was well endowed by Nature to claim much from the world, let her be called a beauty or not.

To all this add the fact that Susan had been sent away to a "finishing school." This had given her decided polish. She came home with advanced ideas. She often talked of woman's rights, the responsibility of motherhood, child culture and all those intellectual things so much more worthy of our conversation than the ordinary prattle and neighborhood gossip. This was her sentiment.

Susan expected to be married and she wanted to be a mother. She confided to her few most intimate girl friends that she wanted two boys and one girl. It would be so nice to have the boys a few years older and grow up as brotherly protectors for the sister. They would see to it that no improper association was brought into the sister's life, and their desire to keep her good will and good opinion would exercise a restraining and beneficial influence upon them. These imaginary sons were to be model boys and model men. They would be such a credit to their parents and to themselves.

It was a pleasure to hear Susie go on about these unborn children. She had it all planned out from the day of conception even, to say nothing of the day of birth—to the great day of successful and noble manhood. Her eyes would glisten as she told of her plans—these secret delicate plans so near to a young woman's heart and not confessed to everybody, or indeed not scarcely to anybody.

In some way, perhaps accidentally, Susie had run across a book on eugenics. This she had digested thoroughly. By much reading and thinking she had what might be termed a good idea of theroretical matrimony and motherhood. She knew all about prenatal influences. In her quiet moods she pictured the features, dispositions and tendencies of these imaginary children. One, the first, a son should have musical talent and might be dedicated to the church. Susie was thoroughly religious. She had just then read "The Little Minister," and to have her firstborn give his life to the ministry would be a glorious thing. She also read "The Calling of Dan Matthews," and her son should be like Dan, only he would stick to his calling.

Once she let her imagination drift away until it turned out a day-dream in which she saw a young man of noble mien, standing in the pulpit, filling the great church with his eloquent voice, moving a great congregation to enrapt attention. She thrilled with pleasure and pride as she looked about her—this dream was so real—and saw many moved to tears. When the service was over and the people prepared to leave someone near leaned over the pew and asked, "Who is this wonderful new minister?"

"That is my son. His name is——" Alas, what would his name be? The startling fact that she could not tell the lady his name, the

name of her own son, brought Susie back to her own world and she laughed heartily.

"There is no use counting your chickens before they are hatched," she said to herself, which it seemed to me, was a very pertinent remark. One thing had been settled, however, the first boy would be John, just plain John.

How true it is that all these woman thoughts are but the promptings of motherhood. This wonderful Cosmic call to procreate is the great dominating passion of all life. Susie and all her kind do not express it so, but their admiration for men is but the process for selecting suitable subjects to be fathers of their children. Those men who admire Susie and her kind, do not say so and perhaps do not know it consciously, but what that admiration really says is, "There is a girl that would make a fine mother for my children."

Wonderful Cosmic urge.

Susie was twenty-two when she decided that William Hillis was the man. She came to this decision by the process of elimination, and it just had to be, naturally, Billy Hillis.

"You see, it is this way," she said to her mother one quiet afternoon as they talked it over. That was one good thing among many good things about Susan, she made a confidante of her mother.

"I sure see it will be some way right soon. I reckon it's the best way too, though it'll be

hard to see you go, Susan." Mrs. Marvin wiped a tear from each eye.

"Mother dear, you all—you know I will always be your daughter and will always love you just the same."

"Yes, yes, honey, I know, I reckon I know. Now tell me."

"Well, it's this way. There is Sam Douglas. Sam is good but headstrong. His family is all right, but I can't help thinking of the old Judge when I am with Sam. So out goes he," and she folded her little finger into her palm.

"Now this is George Norris. I like George. He is a jolly good friend but too sporty. The future never enters his head. He is a good fair weather fellow, but I don't think he would bear the storm. Out goes George." The ring finger was then closed.

"Now comes Perry J. Perkins. Perry knows money when he sees it. His father's bank will be Perry's bank some day. It is a good family too. Perry's sister Jennie has always been my best chum. How would Perry do, mother?"

"Susan, child, your father and me will be suited when you are."

"Then, mother, I'll tell you why I am going to marry William Hillis if he asks me, and I reckon he will tonight. Billy is good, kind and has no bad habits. His family is old, respected and among the best—as good as ours. He is ambitious and has a good future in his profession. He isn't so much on looks, but makes up for it in character, and—and—mother, I

think I like him better than any boy I ever knew."

Then the two women wept a few minutes quietly.

Billy did ask and was accepted. The town of Harpersburg congratulated both Billy and Susan. The wedding, honeymoon and all that went along as such things usually do. All this is not a part of our story.

William loved his wife. No doubt about that. When they took the train for a new home in a large northern city where Billy had secured a good position in the engineering department of a great steel manufacturing concern, he said, "Never fear, mother, I'll take good care of her."

"I know you will, William," yet Susan's mother cried as if she doubted it. These family partings seem hard, yet such is the way of life. We should be used to it by this time.

Billy and Susan had been married a year to the day when John arrived. Susan had been getting ready for him for months. She made all the dainty little baby things with her own hands. She read a good deal, good fiction and religious writings. She read "The Logic of Christian Evidence," Paley's "Law and Evidence" and other works of sound theology. She wanted to give John his bent for the ministry. She kept herself cheerful and happy in spite of some aches and pains for she wished

him to have a good disposition. John should be a model baby. His mother knew the importance prenatal impressions and influence.

Mother Marvin had come North for the great occasion and to lend her skill and aid in the trying time. She declared she could not stand the Northern niggers—Susan had a colored cook just then—"If they was down our way they'd soon learn their place." The obstreperous cook was banished and Mrs. Marvin carried the whole load of household affairs alone. She'd rather do it, she said, than have to stand these Northern niggers.

When baby John was washed and dressed and Grandma laid him on Mamma Susan's arm in the bed beside which sat the proud and happy Billy, the young mother said, "Isn't he glorious, Billy? God is good—oh, so good. Now I'm a mother. I'm paying my debt. But, Billy, I don't think I want any more—at least I don't think so just now."

Baby John cried a good deal. He seemed to have all the forty different kinds of colic and Billy said he yelled just for the fun of it. At the office some one told him about the Jewish man who said, "Ve haf a ten tousand dollar baby up at our house, but ve vould not gif ten cents for anoder just like 'im." Billy said he agreed with the gentleman.

Mother Marvin's methods of baby training did not agree very well with Mamma Susan's but rather than give offense she decided to let

things go until she should get up. Then she would start in rightly with baby John and he would soon be a good baby. But Susan did not get up for a month, and by that time John's bad habits seemed somewhat confirmed. He would sleep days and yell nights—of course "yell" is not a nice word but that was what Billy called it.

Still baby thrived, and when Susan got about Mother Marvin went home. She said the less mother-in-law we have about as a steady thing is, as a rule, the better. Billy said he wished all mother-in-law records were as good as his.

"I don't think you will have to come again very soon, Mother—not for the same purpose," Susan said at parting. "I've changed my ideas some lately."

"Oh, well, we shall see—we shall see," was Mrs. Marvin's reply.

Little John did like music. When a year old he would get a basin from the kitchen and a tack hammer or something and creep into the living room. Then he would pound away so loudly no one could talk and be heard. Of course company said it was so cute, but Mamma Susan would say, "Why son, son John, you can't do that." Then she would take the things away from him. In a few minutes he would have either the same objects or something equally effective and resume his labors. Mamma would repeat the disarming process, at which the sensitive feelings of son John

would be decidedly hurt and he would make loud music with his own voice. At this juncture mamma would beg to be excused to take baby to another room, where after many sorts of cajoling his wounded heart would be forgotten in sleep.

Presently Mamma Susan would return saying, "He was sleepy, that's all. Still I will admit I have had all my baby theories spoiled. This boy John just upsets all my plans for him."

When John was two he was too cute for anything. He would catch the cat by the tail and throw him down stairs and say, "Ta—tat," and point his thumb at the discomforted creature. Once kitty rebelled and the cat came back with a good scratch across the child's hand and arm. It took considerable nursing and petting to sooth his heart after this. He kept saying, "Tat hurt John's warrum." When those final sobs ended in sleep, mamma laid him on the bed saying, "Poor little son."

Kitty was banished.

Susan was telling callers one day how Papa William had said he would have to take the kinks out of John and how the baby at breakfast that morning had said, "Papa, I take tinks out of oo." Mamma thought it was a funny story, and little John thought so too, for he laughed with the rest. His ego was already swelling rapidly. He was the center of

the stage. He ruled the house. He was getting to be master of all he surveyed. He was such a cute child.

By this time William Hillis had won promotion and felt established enough to buy a home. It was a new place, eight rooms, modern but undecorated. They decided to leave the walls as they were till son got a little older, and too, to make the old furniture do. It was already well marked and dented by the baby's busy hammer, and the walls were not long wanting his attention. He discovered he could pound holes in the plaster, and papa's pencil was handy to trace all kinds of criss-cross marks along the white spaces. Of course Mamma said, "Why son, son John," and took the pencil away. He was such an active child.

Summer came and John was now three. The porch with its improvised gate would hold him no longer. He had discovered that there were other children in the world. Many times a day Mamma Susan would seek him, calling "John, son John, come home," but son John paid no heed. She usually carried him home held under an arm with his heels beating a vigorous tattoo against her back and his lusty voice letting the whole neighborhood know his displeasure.

Next door lived the Greens. Little Lizzie was four and Benny six. They were gentle children and humored him. John often played with the Green children. One day things did no go to suit him, so he caught up the little sand spade and with one sturdy blow on the

head with his three year old arm, felled Lizzie to the walk where she lay unconscious until discovered by a passer-by, who called the alarmed mothers upon the scene. For this John received a "good whipping," which he seemed to forget by the next day.

Mrs. Green informed Mrs. Hillis that hereafter John could not play with her children. "He's just a little savage and you keep him at home until you can teach him better." This and other things she said quite forcibly. Billy had a fence built between the lots. Susan was dreadfully hurt about John. She talked to him a good deal, then some more.

It began to dawn upon Susan that motherhood was something more than theory. The child worried her. The only peace she had was when John was asleep. Billy noticed how thin she was getting, and her pink cheeks were pale now.

"You must have help Susan," he said.

"Will, the last three girls I had left on account of baby. I just can't have these outside influences in the house."

It was a proud day when little John, now five years old, was carried away to the kindergarten. It was great fun riding in the wagon, a row of children facing all about, with a kind teacher to oversee them. The school was but a few blocks away and Mamma Susan could see the building from the front porch. About an

hour after the wagon had rumbled away with the children, she looked down the street. There she saw John trudging homeward with a larger boy following at a respectful distance.

"Why, son, son John, what is the matter?" was the mother's greeting.

"I don't like that school. I came home."

Just then the older boy came up the steps and handed Mrs. Hillis a note. It read:

> Dear Mrs. Hillis: Your son is so incorrigible we let him go or rather sent him home for the present. If you will come with him for a day or two I think we will get on all right with him.
>
> He has never learned the least idea of obedience and has no conception whatever of the rights of others.
>
> Come with him tomorrow.
>
> Respectfully,
>
> Martha Allington, Teacher.

Poor little Mamma Susan, first angry, then chagrined, burst into tears. John stood mutely by watching her. Finally she dried her eyes and asked, "What did you do at school, John?"

"Nothing! I just shoved a boy out of my way—that's all."

"What then?"

"That teacher came—the one with things on her eyes—she came and set me up on a high chair."

"Then?"

"Then I got down. I won't sit on a high chair, so I won't."

"Then what?"

"She put me up again, then—then—I kicked at her."

"Oh, son, son."

"Then I wouldn't stay any more, an' she said, 'Go home, boy, go home.'"

"Then what?"

"Then I came out an' that boy kept followin' behind me. One time I turned 'round and made a face at him."

Again Susan was cast down with the conviction that she had failed as a mother. She wondered why. She tried to analyze the whole thing. The words of that note from the teacher kept ringing in her ears:

"Never learned the first idea of obedience. No conception of the rights of others."

She had tried to be so patient with John. He was such an active child, so full of life, she could not confine him altogether. She could not correct and punish a baby for every little baby trick. What was wrong? Those cruel words could not be true. "Never learned the first idea of obedience. No conception of the rights of others." What had he been sent to the school for? Did they expect little angels of perfection to come to them?

When John was eight he was kidnapped—at least he said he was. Two rough men, tramps he called them, took him down the rail-

road track and were waiting for a train to come along to carry him off. Watching for a chance when they were not looking he had slipped away and came home. Susan believed the story, and made William believe it. They called in the police and from them the newspapers heard the tale. It made a good item and the boys with noses for news worked it for all it was worth. The "tramps" read the story and went to headquarters.

They worked they said, at the Riggles Livery Stable. The boy had been a frequent loiterer about the barn and had been suspected of stealing whips. On this day they hid and watched him. When he had selected a whip and skipped away they ran after him, caught him, took the whip away and gave him a few good cuts with it. This sent him home crying.

This version of the story was told to John's parents. It seemed as if the boy had some diabolical skill for revenge, since in that state kidnapping is punished by life imprisonment. The welts and bruises John bore now looked very differently than when supposed to originate in a fierce struggle with two ruffians.

Mamma Susan threw herself upon the boy's bed that night and cried as if her heart would break, but John was obdurate.

"Those men told lies—they did mamma, they did."

"Oh, son, I'd rather see you dead and put in the cold ground than have you grow up a

liar and a thief. Oh, God, what have I done to deserve all this? What have I done?"

Tears stood out in John's eyes. He did not like the thought of that cold ground, but he would not confess.

When John was sixteen he managed to finish the Grammar school. He did not like study very well and was somewhat backward in his work. He told his father he wanted to go to work. He was already a confirmed cigarette user and had other vices his parents knew nothing of. He said he wanted to be a man and get into men's work. He had education enough.

By this time William held an important office with the steel company and had a good income. He urged upon John the importance of his getting such an education that he might follow his father in the same line of work. The boy had always had plenty of spending money, but he never knew the value of a dollar by earning one with his own labor.

"You can settle the matter right now, my son," said William, "you are going to school. Just when and for what purpose we will decide before the time comes."

Before the matter was settled, however, John had disappeared. Not a trace of him could be found.

The worry and suspense made Susan sick. She seemed already an old woman. Care and anxiety had driven all the bloom from her

cheeks and the wavy hair was streaked with gray.

Days and weeks went by but not a word from John. The coming of the postman, so closely watched at first, no longer interested her. She knew he was dead. Then at other times she imagined him living and wandering about, begging for food at people's doors. Dispair had taken a firm grip on Susan's heart. The only solace she had left was to pray for John. Every night she wondered where he was; if he had any place to sleep. At every meal she could scarcely eat thinking how John might be hungry at that moment.

William had employed detectives, police and newspaper advertisements. He had followed down many false clues. His advertisements brought many letters from people impersonating John and asking for money. But no word came from anyone concerning the real John.

Six months passed, then one day a telegram came.

Brooklyn Navy Yard,
Joined the navy. Come and get me out.
John.

Both mother and father started for New York at once. Susan revived wonderfully when she knew John was alive and no doubt well. She chatted about what they would do; how good it would be to have John at home; how they must take him into William's office; get him interested in some worthy endeavor,

etc. To all this William said little. He seemed unusually quiet and thoughtful.

At the Navy Yard they found John, enlisted under an assumed name. One of the government launches took them out to his ship. It was an embarrassing meeting. The boy hardly expected to see his mother. He was looking for his father to come and take him away, as he had seen other fathers do with their sons. His face got very red and he swallowed hard at times as if something choked him.

"Oh, son, why did you do it?" This was Susan's greeting as she clasped her boy in her arms.

There is no need to dwell upon the visit. Mother and father were shown over the ship. It seemed like a great floating white castle to them. Everything moved like clockwork. Order, system, cleanliness, obedience, law and—punishment were there. There had been a long interview between William and the commanding officer.

"You'll see about it tomorrow, won't you, Dad?"

This was John's good bye question as they left for the hotel. After supper William said, "I want to tell you a few things, Sue. I think we had better leave John where he is. For a few hundred dollars I can arrange his release, but I am sure it would be a bad investment."

"But William, think how the boy will feel if we don't take him home."

"Think how we will feel if we do. No, little wife, I've let you run that boy ever since he was born, but it's time now I took a hand before it's too late. John Hillis is going to stay in the navy and serve his time out. It will make a man of him."

By tactful explanation John was finally reconciled to trying it a while longer. By the time his first home leave came, he had begun to take some pride in his new life and work, letters from his teachers and officers began to praise his deportment and progress. After the visit home, he went back determined to stick it out.

John is still in the navy. He has two more years to serve. In his last letter, among other things he said, "Yes, mother, it is a sure thing, they do teach us to obey orders and we get a mighty good notion of the rights of others."

After John had gone Susan said, "William, God is good. I think we better have another baby right away before it is too late. I think I am better fitted now to be a mother. I have learned that motherhood means something more than a loving heart and the organs of reproduction. I want to try again, Billy."

Joel Rigby's Monument.

The old man had been talking nearly all the morning with "one o' them travelin' agents". The invalid wife had seen the "goin' on" from her usual outlook, seated by the "settin' room" window. During the interview Joel Rigby and the agent had come from the barn to the front porch, and from where they sat looking over the catalogues, sundry low voiced remarks had caught the ever-alert ear of the old lady, dulled by age and sickness though it was, yet keen enough to know what was going on about the premises. She had the usual question mark of fear common to all pessimists. Harm is always looked for, but good is not expected. If it comes, it is a wonder, that is all there is to it.

Stray glimpses too, she caught, of pictures, as she looked across the porch from the window where she sat, and had been sitting most of the waking hours for the past twenty years. The pictures gave her at once a grave suspicion that "Pa" was again bent on buying a monument. She had on several previous occasions thwarted a like purpose, and she meant to do so now.

Had these catalogue books been open to "Ma' as they had been to the good old man,

certainly nothing less than another "bad spell" would have followed, for there was no end of death suggestions: Angels with hovering wings, all carved from the immortal marble, stationed on square and circular pedestals; also cherubims with glad smiles, to say nothing of lambs, doves and open books. All these Joel Rigby saw with just a little shiver running up and down his spine, and faithful caretaker that he was, and had been all these years, he knew full well the danger of taking "Ma" into the details of this monument transaction.

Ma—let us fall into the old man's way and call her so—had been dying for twenty years, or it was expected she would die most any time. Some of the neighbors were cold hearted enough to say it might be a good thing, for it would give Joel a chance to have a little peace before his own time came. Some were willing to bet she would outlive the old man yet, for he was then eighty-seven. Long since the village doctor's gig ceased hitching at the Rigby gate, and for a year or two it had not even halted, as the doctor flew by, his long white whiskers and hair flying in the wind.

Mrs. Joel Rigby kept track of things. "Pa, I wonder who's sick up the plank road to make Dr. Black in such a powerful sight of hurry?" Joel knew this meant he should waylay the doctor or any passerby to gain the desired information.

When a woman of Lucretia Rigby's determination had made up her mind to be incurably

sick there was no further use for a doctor. It is true Joel would at long intervals hail the passing doctor. "Now you're passin' Doc, come in and see my wife." The doctor understood what "now you're passin' " meant. He would not be expected to charge a regular fee. The expense, this played an important role in all the Rigby deliberations. Ma's greatest virtue had been to save. Not a thing could go to waste about her domain. Even the decaying apples must be used first, and Pa had once braved reproach to suggest that she kept them eating "rotten apples all the time, trying to save the sound ones."

But this monument matter was an important event. There had been two hundred dollars in the Wellsville Corners Bank for some time, laid aside for this special monumental purpose. This was not all that scrimping and scraping for fifty odd years had accomplished to be sure, for there was much more in this and other safe places. But this monument fund had waited patiently for the opportune time to be used for its destined purpose. Joel had been "lottin' " on living to see the family properly represented in the village cemetery.

Now as he bid the friendly agent good-bye at the stable door, a settled feeling crept over the stooped and tottering old man, a feeling that comes to one who believes that an eternal peace has been made with the Almighty and the last worldly duty properly done. The illustrated monument catalogue was tucked away in the

little box at the barn where he kept his "Sweet Cuba Fine Cut" tobacco and his "pep'mints". Years and years ago he had fought and won the battle which forever gave him these two indulgences, and in the oft repeated phrase of the morning prayer about "forgivin' and forgettin' our sinful indulgences," fine cut and peppermints played an important part.

Monument No. 241 had been selected. A square, massive granite block, with sloping top and on either side a polished space for names and other data. The agent had carried away the paper upon which the old man had scrawled the family names and dates.

"Now remember," Joel said at parting, "I ain't signed nothin' an' if that stone ain't sot up by Decoration Day I don't want it."

"Oh, we shall surely have it there by that time," the agent insisted, carefully putting the folded paper in his pocket book, thinking it might serve as evidence of the order if need arose.

"I never sign nothin'" Joel had said. "When the stone is sot up the money is ready."

The book safely hidden the horse Billy remembered with a "pep'mint" or two, then the poor old man collected all his courage and tottered off toward the house, where he knew the ordeal of explaining what he had done and what he had not done, awaited him. He marveled now, as he made his way along the grass path, how little he feared what Ma might say, but buying a monument was different—a part

of one's last earthly acts, he thought, and this lent him justification. He had faithfully reported and consulted, even abided by Ma's judgement in every business detail during all those fifty odd years of their married life. Now to break over and really do something of which he knew she did not approve, called for superhuman strength, and surprised him how little he seemed concerned. As he went along he hummed his favorite tune, "Oh, Happy day that fixed my chice," as he said it, and this was his song, treading the narrow pathway that led to the house.

In the early days Joel Rigby had been a drover, and some even yet lived who said he was a tricky buyer and seller, but so many years had passed since Joel had been little else but his wife's faithful nurse, and doing little else save now and then some feeble plodding about the garden and doing the "chores", that such a character, had he rightly deserved it, was long since forgotten. A faithful mourner at the communion bench at the "Corner's" Methodist Church, Joel often sought consolation with tearful eyes and endeavored to feel that he had made and was making full atonement. He always "jined" in the singing and his quavering old voice told very well the story of his spiritual enthusiasm. Better evidence still of the old man's sincerity was his prayers. When he testified of the "savin' grace" and said how he hardly knew where he should have been that day but for "my wife's prayers" he never

failed to bring forth a loud chorus of hearty and fervent "amens", even though the same story had been told a hundred times before at the "class meetin' " hour.

Such was Ma's faithful servant, nurse and attendant through all these years the decided old lady had sat in her usual chair in her usual corner of the "settin' room." True this service from time to time had been augumented by a "woman" employed after due deliberation and discussion especially of the matter of wages. A liberal pension from the government and habits of constant scrimping had kept them far from penury, but "Ma" could endure a "hired woman" only about so long. The kitchen floor, though scrubbed every morning "right after prayers and dishes" and always so respected by Joel that he tip-toed across it, was never quite so white as she used to keep it. One thing and the only thing about which she was willing to boast was the fact that she was neat, and always had been so. Neatness was a twin sister of godliness and they were never separated in her mind.

In former years it was not much trouble for Ma to put the pans and other utensils in their proper places. These "hired wimmin" never could learn that the yellow bowls must be turned upside down and arranged in a row from large to small on the third shelf, and that the bone handled knives and forks must be placed side by side at the South end of the second shelf. Then too, the "salt risin' emp-

tins'' were always ''spilin' '' and they peeled the ''pertaters as if they weren't worth a dollar a bushel, an' the very best part is right next the peelin'.''

''Land sakes, dew tell that woman to pack her duds and go. I'm so nervous my heart's bustin'.'' This remark had been heard many times in the old farm house, and Joel would bundle ''that woman'' off. Then often for a week or a month, two whole dollars a week had been saved, besides ''what the critter wasted and et herself.'' A long respected Rigby axiom had been, ''Savin' is the same as earnin'.'' It was observed that a three dollar a week woman lasted less time than the two dollar grade. The more expense involved the sooner it undermined Ma's nerves.

Along the path came Joel humming ''Oh happy day'' just as if this monument business had not come up to be fought out. Two hundred dollars! Years and years had passed since a sum of even two figures had been spent all at one plunge and now to think of a sum with three figures should make one tremble. But Joel felt never a tremble. He was thinking how fine and grand that monument would look, standing there on the hillside in the village cemetery.

As he passed the corner of the house, now as usual he rolled his well worn quid into his hand and gave it careful scrutiny. Deciding that the goodness was all out of it, instead of placing it carefully in his nickel tobacco box,

he deposited it at the root of the old poplar tree along with many companions of like fate, which made a neat little mound there. Joel never chewed tobacco in the house. It made Ma nervous.

"Joel," came the commanding voice from the sitting room. Mrs. Rigby never said "Joel" except on serious and important occasions.

"Come in here." The old man approached. "Why, Pa, dew look at your boots."

Looking as bid, the old man hastily tottered off to the kitchen steps where he gravely and slowly swept and brushed his cowhides, meanwhile realizing that he had less courage than he thought. The task done, he once more entered the invincible presence. This time her gaze fixed itself upon his face instead of his feet.

"Pa, go wash your face; you'll feel better. There is somethin' on your whiskers too." Could it be possible that in the excitement of the monument ordering he had forgotten his tobacco juice? Such a thing had been so often called to his mind, that his usual habit was to gather the long white beard in his hand and hold it well away from the line of his abundant expectoration. Clutching it now, he obeyed again and gave his face a thorough scrubbing at the kitchen sink. At last approaching the sitting room door, he asked meekly, "Did ye want anything, Ma?"

"Codfish and saleratus! Dew I want anything?"

Here the little old lady set her thin lips firmly together and fixed her sharp black eyes on her husband. A picture of discomfort he sat, his long white beard twitching nervously as he twirled his thumbs and looked at the floor. The well patched over-alls hutched up nearly to his shoulders and a "jumper" of like material covered his bony frame, and covered too, a kindly heart. He often bemoaned their lonely and forsaken lot, with no kith or kin to help them along the last years of life. It was a problem he had never been able to solve, just as we other mortals often fail to realize what course of conduct builds for a happy and peaceful love-cared old age. It is a great art to grow old gracefully and cheerfully.

"Be you goin' to buy a monument?"

Here he was face to face with the long and short of it.

"Why Ma, I've been lottin' on dewing it for a long time now, an' I'm lookin' into it a little. I haint really done it yet—I signed nuthin'. I told 'em what they could do, that's all," he hastened to explain.

"Lottin on it! I'm not lottin' on it—you may be, but I'm not," and she brought out the "I" with emphasis. "Land sakes! I rather have the money to keep us out of the poorhouse, instead of piling it up there in a new fangled tomb-stun. We've got nobody to be weeping

around anyway.'' The old lady lifted her glasses to wipe away her tears.

''There, there, Ma, don't take on so. I can tell 'em not to bring it. I ain't signed nuthin'.''

''No, but your sot on havin' it, and it's just sinful vanity. I'd a good sight rather other people would put up my monument. If they can't remember us without a tomb-stun, it'll take more'n that to make 'em do it. Oh, my head is going to bust!'' and rocking to and fro, the old invalid pressed her hands to her temples.

''But Ma, Squire Brainard set up his tomb-stun an' nobody said nuthin','' the husband urged.

''There, there, never mind, never mind, 'nough said. Pa, you put the kettle bilin' for some tea.'' Glad to escape, the old man shuffled from the room.

The monument however, remained the one great item in Joel Rigby's mind during the days that intervened the agent's visit and Decoration Day. If the promises were kept, the ever-enduring granite block would mark, with dignity and good taste the last resting place of the Rigby family. He hoped nothing would happen. Surely nothing could happen—to him or anybody in so short a time.

Somewhere ''out West'' a daughter, the only child that had blessed their home, was sleeping in the peace of the grave, and though years had flown, Joel thought how fitting and appropri-

ate it would be to have Ludencia removed and brought home to rest along with Pa and Ma, and where the new monument would, by Decoration Day, mark well the family burial place. All this however, was dismissed with a sigh. He did not know how Ma would take it, and then too, there was the expense. They never heard from Jim, Ludencia's husband. Jim might object to such a plan. Ma had opposed Jim. He was not good enough for Ludencia, she said, but the girl had a will and a mind of her own. Some said she came honestly by it. For his part he liked Jim well enough. In the parlor there was a daguerreotype picture of Jim and Ludencia just after they went away. There had been no wedding. They just drove away and were married, hardly saying good bye to the old folks. Ludencia had written sending the picture, saying how happy she was and asking forgiveness. They never wrote letters, and "out West" somewhere was almost out of the world. It was out of their world—his world—Ma's world.

The next news had been a letter from Jim. Ludencia had died giving birth to a little daughter. Ma had taken to her chair soon after that. They did not reply to Jim's letter. They talked it over, talked about writing or having the squire at the Corners write, but it never came to anything. Maybe the child was dead too by this time. It would be time enough to find this grandchild after they were gone. Let the squire attend to that.

Only once since the agent's visit had the old lady referred again to the monument. "Pa," she said, "be you sot on gettin' the monument?"

"Ma, we aint got much longer to stay here." The poor old man's voice trembled and a tear stole down his withered cheek. "And besides, I'd feel more comfortable like if we could use a little of what we've got laid by in this way. Then too, we've got nobody to dew for us and nobody to do for, except ma'be the child." They sometimes spoke of "the child" or "Ludencia's child." They had never known her name.

"Never mind, never mind, there, there, 'nough said. I shall have a spell if you keep on," and she motioned him away. The order for monument No. 241 he knew was sealed.

On the morning of the eventful day that was to bring the monument, Joel Rigby came bustling in from the barn with more than his usual alacrity. He had news from the agent. A messenger told him to come down to the cemetery at once.

"Ma," he said, "the monument's come."

The old lady heard with eyelids closed—an indifference entirely assumed to dampen the old man's excitement. She thought him worldly to be so much concerned about such a thing.

"Ma," coming closer, "it's come."

"Land sakes, Pa, you act like a four year old

boy. You'd better send the money to convert the heathen. I'm glad I aint got it to answer for."

The old man fumbled with his hat a moment and muttered something about going down to "show 'em how to sot it up."

Old Billy was hitched up in short order and the wobbly old buggy was soon sheltered in the "meetin' house" shed, and Joel was helping at the job of setting up his own monument.

At last when the final stroke was done, the money paid, the workmen and the agent gone. the old man still stood looking at the stone, reading the names and birth dates. Now and then his hands smoothed down the sloping sides as if to caress it. "Rigby" he repeated, looking down as he read the bold letters at the base. "Rigby" he said again, and his tired head rested against the polished surface where the names had been cut. It was all there except the date of death. That might not be long he thought. Another year perhaps, they would come and cut the date. "Joel Rigby, Born August 5th, 1819. Died ——, ——". It was Decoration Day now in his fancy. He thought he saw the comrades, many old and bent like himself, coming to lay a wreath on his grave. He heard the fife and drum. The old G. A. R. boys were marching, the ladies' Corps following proudly in the rear. Flags, big and little, everywhere waving. They did not mind the dusty road or the warm sun. It was a duty they loved and none too feeble to

make that little yearly march from the hall to the graves, and back to the hall again.

Leaning now against the monument the old man fancied he heard voices calling him, Ludencia's among them. Yes, it was Ludencia. She was running down to the gate to meet him, calling "Oh dad, I'm glad you've come. Supper is all ready. My but you look tired!"

How tired he felt. Pulling at those ropes and levers with the men, was a young man's work. He was surely an old man now. He heard the girl still talking. He felt her hand in his, but the other voices would not be quiet. If they would only let him rest. Rest, that was all he asked.

Down the tired old man slowly settled, half sitting at the side of the new monument. There he lay hour after hour, so still and at peace. It was the peace of death.

Old Billy, calling and pawing in the church shed caused the villagers to wonder. The next morning they found the old man dead beside the stone to mark his grave. On Decoration Day they laid him there, with flags at his head. They marched again with fife and drum, but someway death seemed so near, the ranks of the marchers growing fewer every year, that little but sorrow stirred their minds. Patriotism is always tinged with grief.

On the day of the monument setting, at the farm house a mile or more away, the old lady rocked back and forth in her chair, gently to

be sure, but restlessly, wondering why Pa did not come. The hired woman must look every now and then to see if there was sight of him. She must be sure and have tea ready, as Pa would be tired.

She did not realize that the old man was tired no more; that somewhere he was even then rejoicing and awaiting her soon-coming with Ludencia and the angels.

How and Why I Failed as a Wife.

It has always been one of my fixed intentions, to which I have religiously adhered, never to "tell things" about my husband to anyone, not even to my own mother. I have also included in this my mother-in-law. The day I was married my mother said, "Now you have made your bed, lie in it." It matters not how fully we girls made confidantes of each other and our mother, a practice I always supposed was a sign of good moral health, we ended these confidences about the sacred personal matters of the married relation, before they began.

I have many times held in contempt those wives who prattle about their husbands and all their petty trials with them. I have been shocked at the abandon displayed by some—really vulgar talk—talk that I have heard wives carry on in their confidential gossips over their teacups. Of what husbands say about wives I know nothing, or knew nothing until now.

* What shall I say then, when I have read what my own husband, Hugh Stunt, M. D., puts

* NOTE:—The author here has reference to an article published by Dr. Stunt telling his experience as the husband of a "clinging vine."

in print—things that I have not dared to breathe to my own mother. At first I was desperate, but now after more careful consideration of all things, I have decided to turn the trick. I will give him a liberal dose of his own medicine. Doctor's don't like to take medicine as a rule. They have no use for it but to give to others. I took mine with many tears—that is a woman's way—her privilege, but I have said nothing to Hugh. I shall say nothing even after this appears unless he begins it.

I was no more surprised when I read Hugh's "Clinging Vine" story than he will be when he reads my come back. I would have nothing to say as far as I am concerned personally, for I know our case involves all those technical points of sex psychology that my husband, Dr. Hugh, a man devoted to his science, should understand very well. It is for the sake of other "clinging vines" like me, I am going to tell the "other side of the story." I am not going to say Hugh Stunt was a spoiled youth, fed on great and glorious prophecies until his ego swelled abnormally. I am not saying he was a pampered, idolized, egoized son of doting parents, who never allowed him to know what a dollar costs by earning it, as Sam Smith's did—the classmate he tells us about, who now makes ten thousand a year clear, while he makes but three. I am not going to say dear Hugh is jealous of other men's success and is looking for the "goat"; that poor little wife

Gabrielle, who for nearly ten years has been his cook and bottle-washer, errandboy and nursemaid, yet, on his own admission, a successful wife socially and morally—she, Gabrielle must be the goat—I am not saying any of these things. I shall not say anything resentfully or with the sting of revenge in it, for I still love my husband and his silly little clinging vine story is but the outburst of one of his moods. It was hatched in a funk the day he heard from Dr. Sam Smith about the thousand dollar fee he (Dr. Stunt) did not get and was not in a position to get. That fee story sent Dr. Hugh to his den in great pique and there he healed it by committing to paper some of the most sacred and private things—psychic things of two family lives.

His good mother, my mother-in-law, charges me with having no respect for the privacies of others. I wonder what she will say of Hugh now, who has put in cold print many things I never would have dared to mention or cared to mention, but to him. But the worm turns—the clinging vine may become a tree, or may not have been a vine at all. The privacies my story will reveal are all honorable and innocent ones, and I run no risk in writing of them for I have no reputation to lose it seems. I may have a chance to gain some poor wife's thanks—one who loves her husband but who does not know how to manage him and make a great financial success out of him, as Hugh says Sam Smith's "deadly competent school

teacher'' wife did with him. What a misfortune it is that men are made or unmade by their wives. Poor tender dears—I never realized before what a responsibility we wives of men carry on our heads!

The truth is doctors are a jealous, punctilious lot, and my Hugh is the best sample I know. They lay claim to a vast amount of fraternalism but it is on par with what is said of beauty—it is only skin deep. Most of them are great bluffers and self-puffers. If one gets an unusually large fee the other fellows go home, lock themselves in and write nasty tirades about their wives, talk strong enough to call for weapons had another said half as much and half as bad. Those who do not gain their mental balance by this method, have other equally desperate and foolish ones. They just have to obtain vent someway.

Nor would I have you suppose that Dr. Hugh Stunt—my husband, whom I took for ''better or for worse'' and all that, really thinks that success in life is measured by dollars and cents merely, though I admit his story sounds that way. Hugh is not paranoiac—these mental aberrations are only temporary. Time and again I have heard him say that many poor men were a greater success than many rich ones. Success he often declaims, when it fits his mood, is that measure of which we radiate joy, love, goodwill—the cheer we inspire—the help we lend others—the story of what we shed off, not what we gather in to hoard and

keep. If I were to tell you of the many cases he has treated free of charge, of the thousands of dollars he has never collected from poor people of our town, and how stubbornly he resents my "meddling with his business," and how vigorously he insists that his home life and his practice must be as historically divorced as is the church and state in America, you might understand more readily why his income slumps to about three thousand a year, while his colleague Sam's runs around ten thousand a year. Hugh would not stand one minute to have me "butt in" about collecting his bills. He does not respect Mrs. Dr. Sam for her activities. He has said in my hearing that it commercialized the profession, cheapend it, degraded it into a mere money making trade. Hugh is wonderfully ethical—indeed I fear more of a stickler about all those delicate points of the professional code than the usual run of doctors, yet he fails to see how much it costs him to be so traditionally ethical, and blames poor me for the loss.

I am, therefore for all these reasons and still other reasons, going to tell my side of the story and let you decide if I am a "clinging vine," a living burden and a deadly hindrance to a natural monarch of the forest, or perchance, a weeping willow standing by the side of a common scrub oak. Remember these are Hugh's metaphors, not mine.

There are too many Hugh Stunts at large in our beloved land to allow such a message as

his to pass unchallenged. Too many men are so besotted with self-esteem which they cannot turn into cash, that thousands of Gabrielles are in great peril unless I administer my antidote—anti-toxine or whatever it may be—my side of the story. I'll trust it to have some neutralizing effect anyway.

II

My father was a farmer's son and my mother a country girl. They were married early in life and I was the third of four daughters to branch out on the family tree. When we were old enough to need better school advantages my father sold his little property and business at the cross-roads and we moved to town. It was largely for our supposed benefit that this change was made. My father then started a feed and coal business, small at first, but it soon grew into some importance in a few years. My father was and is still a genial man, honest and agreeable; he makes friends and customers by square dealing. This plan of business, however, never lifted the family much above the hand-to-mouth stage. We had a comfortable small home which was our own. It was not a very modern house, and father had bought it cheaply on that account no doubt. The second floor space was unequally divided. The smallest of the three bedrooms we kept for what we called our guest chamber. The next in size was father's and mother's room, and the other, the large one, was "our

room." I do not need to dwell long upon this home picture to show the reason, or reasons, why four girls "herded" in one room, two in a bed. I well remember when Mother Stunt "third degreed" all these things out of me, when I went that week for my official try-out. But of that when I get to it.

My father was a good business man, and I am sure mother will say, a good husband. We had no fixed income. I remember how father used to say often of a Saturday night, "Well, Milly"—mother's name—"business was good this week. What do we need?"

Then mother would get out her list. Shoes for Gabrielle; new hat for this one; coats all around; such and such groceries, etc. My father was what is called a good provider, and four growing girls needed much and many things. As we grew older our needs seemed to increase. My father is a good business man. I say so, and all who know him, say so. He always bought and sold for cash, and followed the rule of "pay as you go or don't go." He kept his books carefully at the feed store, and later when the business grew, had them kept by bookkeepers. He knew his expense account by items: freight, delivery, payroll, house and home, etc. When the profit was good the "house and home" account went up; if profits went down, this fluctuating account had to shrink. That is, we waited for new things to wear, bought less and cheaper things for the table, and kept under the line.

I never learned the details of this bookkeeping, but I knew its general principles and purport. It was to live within your income or profits and save a reasonable margin for the rainy day. Mother was a prudent woman, provident but not penurious, liberal not lavish, saving without parsimony. We were taught as children to avoid the penny-wise-pound-foolish system. My father used to say, "Some people waste a dollar's worth of time and energy trying to save a penny." He carried the idea of, not what number of cents can you scrimp out of your income, but how many clean, honest dollars can you add to it, each week. He often talked of people who kept themselves so busy watching pennies that great opportunities for good dollars passed by them unseen. There is a point at which saving ceases to be a virtue. It may become merely a penurious habit. This was his teaching.

I have gone into these personalities to show what a different heredity fell to my lot than to Hugh's. I say heredity, but I may as well add training also. We are all inclined to think our own brand of these heredity goods the best on the market, as you may notice from the other story, yet with all due allowance for my bias, I will always insist that my father was and is a good business man and did well by his children. Neither do I wish to condemn Hugh's heredity and home training. I merely want to contrast it and hint perhaps—well, that there is some truth in the saying about

people thinking all ways and habits are vicious but their own.

The income of the Stunt home was a stated salary. Hugh's father knew to the cent what to count upon and the very day to expect it. It was fixed and certain. Expenses are not fixed and are certain to increase, unless careful watch is kept by methods of record and comparison. Once a month Prof. Stunt received his salary check and brought it home to his wife, who proceeded to dissect it into the various parts and portions designed for the several uses and purposes of the family. A few years of this simple process fixed upon Hugh's father a chronic salary habit, and upon the rest of the family, especially his wife, certain very narrow-minded notions about domestic economy in general. A New England Yankee—you recall that my mother Stunt is of Boston origin—is one of those especially inclined to think no ways but his are right. I admit that baked beans and brown bread are good and wholesome items of civilized diet, but why Saturday night and Sunday morning is the only right time in the week to eat these substantial delicacies remains to me an unsolved mystery. Not so to a Bostonian. That has been a settled fact of history for centuries!

This Boston bean mystery is no more difficult to understand, however, than why Wednesday evening and no other evening, could be utilized by my mother-in-law to post her account book. I know my bookkeeper sister laughed when I

told her about it and said, five minutes a day and half an hour a week or month for footings and comparisons, would be plenty of time in which to keep the record of any family household accounts. What interested me was the habit—a thing so sacred it came before all other social or religious duties, and amounts to an eccentricity if not indeed to a mania—a mild monomania.

I was not as wise then at nineteen, when I spent that "official try-out week" with mother Stunt as I am now at twenty-nine. I did not realize the meaning of it all. I might have been more tactful, yes, deceitful. I could have said, "What a fine system. Teach me how to do it," etc., yet knowing well all the things I have herein stated. I had been taught that honesty and sincerity were virtues, so it was easy for my prospective mother-in-law to find flaws in my mental equipment—flaws as she would judge, because no ways and habits of life were right, but her own.

I believe thousands of wives will agree with me that it is a question whose home methods were the better, Hugh's or mine, yet it is easy for all to admit each system was suited to the home it served. However, I think I have the best of the argument, when I hold that, like my father, Dr. Hugh Stunt has no fixed income. As a business for getting cash medical practice is irregular and uncertain, often fluctuating, even more so than the profits from a feed and coal business. I do not think anyone will deny

it was a hard position for me to fill as a sensitive high-strung girl of nineteen.

There is a point my dear Hugh has lost sight of that I wish to mention here. These very habits of life that naturally follow and influence the whole family—one might say infect—of a salary habit victim, followed my husband into his professional career. Had he been reared in the home of Sam Smith, whose father, like mine, looked for his income in the profit from a job of work or a car of coal, it would not have been so hard for him or for me. Dr. Sam is not only a good doctor—he is a good business schemer. He does not lose sight of the "main chance." They see different visions. My Hugh sees an interesting case, a brilliant diagnosis. Dr. Sam sees a good fee also, and looks well to its collection. Could it be expected of me, a girl of nineteen, to change all this in my husband? He was ten years my senior, and had I not been so blindly in love with him, had I not thought him so ideal and so perfect, had I had the wisdom to recognize his needs then, do you imagine he would have accepted any suggestion from me? Do you?

Right here I am going to say about the hardest thing in all my part of the story. Do you think it manly and honorable for my husband to whimper like a sick pup, and lay the blame of what he calls his failure in life upon his wife, who has loved him almost to folly? Another thing: What do you think of a man who at

thirty-nine calls himself a failure because his income is not as much as some other fellow's he knows, who he says—wonder how he found it out—is not as good a man as he? What do you think of a man who rails at his wife because she does not insist upon buying his socks and suspenders and who tries to dress herself to please him instead of other men; who blames her because she does not pack him off for a post graduate course in Europe? If you were an Englishman wouldn't you call him a bally ass?

My Hugh should head the Suffragette movement. He thinks wives and mothers, should recognize their obligations in the making of successful husbands.

III

But I must not get ahead of my story. As fast as we graduated from High School father gave each of us a chance to select what might be termed a calling. Mother had always taught us that the best calling a girl could aspire to was that of being a successful wife and mother—a real home keeper. To that end we all knew how to do housework—plain housework with no fancy frills or names attached to it. We knew what order and cleanliness meant, though a speck of dust made no such marked disturbance in our home as it did at Prof. Stunt's. Mother often said, "The reason why many men have their dens and clubs is,

they are driven out of the house by nagging wives who give them no peace at home to be natural and easy, contented and restful when they want to relax and smoke." My experience might cause me to add: Wives who want to be queens of homes are apt to be despots also.

My two elder sisters did not choose to accept offers of marriage, and after study at business college, have filled business positions and are self-supporting, thus saving at least two good men from the burden of "clinging vines"—we are all of that type remember. I, the supposed to be, best looking of the group, fancied I would like to try music as a career, and I was in the process of making when Hugh Stunt came into my life. I had really "grown up" while he was away at medical college. We knew him or of him, and, as everybody knew and loved the old professor, the son was more or less a local celebrity.

I was immensely flattered when he began to show an interest in me. I am not going into the details of that year of courtship. I can't do it—I count it too sacred to put on paper. It is enough to say we became engaged. This event seems to have wrecked two great careers, Hugh's in medicine and mine in music. I am not dwelling on the promise I gave my teachers of developing great talent. They talked to me of an operatic future. I could sing well and can yet. My piano technique also, was much praised. I could not charge—I would

not say that my dear Hugh has stood in my way of becoming a professional performer in either line of my art. I had my doubts and still have, about my making any real success in such a career. I knew what a slave-like struggle it meant—what years of grinding work, what constant devotion it demanded, what rigid codes of living, hygiene, diet and all that, which such an undertaking requires. Luckily I was not inflated with the praise my amateur efforts called forth from biased and incompetent friends and relatives. Luckily I say, for I know now how such hopes unrealized have soured my husband's soul, when they were encouraged in him. Better I thought, to be the wife of the man I love, the mother of his children and the maker of his home, than chance failure in music.

One day father said to me, "Gabby, Dr. Hugh Stunt was in to see me today and says he wants to marry you. How about it?"

I knew it was coming, still I felt my face grow hot.

"Yes, Pa, he's asked me."

"What did you say?"

"Why, I—I said I would," I stammered.

"Then what's the use his coming to me if you two had settled it already?" He was laughing so I knew he was teasing me.

"Now, Pa, stop. You know how it is. We want everybody's approval. That is why Hugh came to you. Don't you like him, Pa?"

"Oh, yes, I like him—well enough. I'm not marrying him though, so it don't matter much whether I like him or not. People speak well of him. Seems a nervous chap and has a case of big head, but they seem to need it now days."

That same day mother and I had a long talk and a few happy tears together. Among many other things she said to me, I remember this:

"Gabby, since you and Hugh have been keeping company I have tried to find out what I could about him for your benefit. I do not suppose a girl in love could accept advice, but I'll do my duty by you anyway. Hugh Stunt has lived a very different home life than you. It has been a home in which what they call culture has always been emphasized. The Stunts are mental aristocrats and had they been wealthy they would have been very exclusive. I think you will discover that his mother will consider he is marrying beneath him when he marries you. What Hugh really needs is a wife who can bring to him ample means to continue along the same trend of life."

"But Mother, we are just as good as they are," I interrupted.

"Yes, as we see it, but—well, you will understand later. Love is a great leveler, and it may do the thing, if you are both really in love with each other. As near as I can learn Hugh has always been a nervous boy, subject to fits

of temper, tantrums some folks call it—and—I hope he has or will outgrow it. He has been so bright at school that great things have been predicted of him and expected of him. He has been taught to think the world should fall at his feet, and if it don't—he will blame the world, the stupid world and not himself."

"Hugh is getting a good practice—everybody likes him and says he is a good doctor," I said.

"Yes, I know, but being a good doctor and getting a money success out of it are two different things. But I want to speak of something more important, to you at least. He will expect you to come and live with his mother. It would be nice if you could for she would now be left entirely alone. As to whether you should or could is not for me to say. One thing I do know: As the old saying is, 'No roof is large enough to cover two families,' I fear you would have a sorry time. If it turns out that you have to live with Hugh's mother I hope it may be for the best, I hope so. I am sure you can get along someway, and when she is gone you will not be sorry you were good to her and humored her in her ways."

This as I remember it, was my mother's warning. You may be sure I accepted Hugh's mother's invitation to spend a week with her with some fear and trembling.

"I know what she wants," I told Hugh. "She wants to size me up and see what a bad bargain you are making."

"Nonsense, Gabrielle, mother just wants to get better acquainted with you, since you are going to be her daughter. She wants to know you and you to know her."

"I know I shall feel as if I were on trial for my life all the time I am there, but I will come. Hugh, I love you so much I want to be and do just what is best for you," I said.

"I know you do, dear heart, I know you will."

IV

One of the first things I noticed when I entered Hugh's home, or rather his mother's home, was its stately formality. The very walls reflected dignity, austere precision and cold serenity. Mrs. Stunt greeted me kindly but without enthusiasm. She did not offer to kiss me, nor did I her. We shook hands.

"If you are going to be Hugh's wife," she began, when we were seated and the doctor had gone about his work, and continued with what sounded to me like a set speech of the lady chairman of the Women's League. I never thought of it then, but I have since wondered how it happened that Hugh had such a rush of business that week. I scarcely saw him during the whole visit.

"If you are to be Hugh's wife." I wondered what the "if" meant. Had she any doubts about it? Was our engagement provisional? If I were not to be his wife, what

was I to be? I had heard of wives that were their husbands' dolls; others that were called clothes horses, but I was not able to fathom what my future mother-in-law had in her mind. Well, she went on to say how she thought it would be best for us to know each other better, especially if we were going to live together. As she talked I looked about me and asked myself if I could ever be happy in that house—in that atmosphere.

Day by day my visit passed and we got on somehow. The only topic I could introduce for conversation that seemed to arouse any interest in her was when we talked of Hugh. She never called me Gabrielle. I was Miss when she addressed me. More often, she would begin her addresses with that impressive title, "Say." I was in a flutter of fear and excitement all the time I was there. I wanted to make a good impression for Hugh's sake as well as my own. I had a feeling all the time as if she did not want to like me.

"Oh, Hugh is a wonderful boy," she would say. "He has such a bright future. He has great success with his cases, and all his faculty said he would go to the top of his profession. There are few boys like Hugh."

To hear all this praise for the man I loved only pleased me and I was a flattering listener. I did not see in it the covert insinuation that he was foolish to waste himself on such a poor prospect as little Gabrielle. It took years for that to seep through my soul.

One evening she got out her account book. She opened it as reverently as one would the big family Bible.

"Do you know," she said, "I do not think young people realize the meaning—the financial meaning of running a home. If you and Hugh ever expect to get on in life and have anything, you will have to do as I have done. I mean you, yourself. I know Hugh better than you do, as I knew his father before him. If you do not know how and do not manage the purse you will never have anything."

"I don't know," I replied. "Papa earns the money at our house and he knows from the condition of his business what to allow us to spend."

"But I know," she almost snapped. "Those who spend all the business or the law allows never have anything left."

I knew I had made a blunder somehow, and explained that the money getter should know what the home expense should be—what could be afforded. I could see she thought I was too dense to understand her. However, she went on to show me how she knew by her record what it had cost from week to week to live, to run the Stunt home away back year by year long before Hugh was born. I am sure she could have footed up and told me to the cent just what Hugh had cost from his birth to the present moment. It seemed sordid to me, this reducing of life to mere dollars and cents and

translating all its meaning into terms of money.

"Hugh, as I said, has a great future in his profession. He is making a great sacrifice in his plans by marrying now," she said. I knew Hugh had talked of going abroad to study some more, and I thought I knew what she meant.

"Do you think I shall hinder him? If I thought so I would give him up. I love him too well to want to stand in his way."

"If you get the right idea of your duty you will help, not hinder. I am trying to show you. Young people in love are blind to the practical things of life. Living costs just the same. You have got to plan ahead, look ahead and provide for next month, next year—the future."

Thus she went on giving me a wholesome discourse on household management and domestic economy in general. I took it in the best I could. I did not realize then as I do now, that the habits this good and capable woman had established in her household and fixed in the minds of its members, especially my Hugh's meant so much to me. I did not realize then, as now, that such women teach their husbands to regard them as official stewards, shrewd buyers, bargain hunters, and if by all this racing and chasing they obtain the needful at less cost than the month before it is a mark of competency.

Until now I had supposed a successful housewife secured her supplies and provisions by

any reasonable and prudent plan, used these things without undue waste, kept her table wholesome and appetizing, did her housework or saw it done with regularity, order and neatness, then if she had any spare time as she should have, she might well spend it in social, church or other public concerns for the good, not only of other people, but of herself and her husband.

I confess I went home from this visit considerably muddled.

"Well, how did you like mother?" asked Hugh on his next call at my home.

"She is a lovely old lady," I replied.

"But how do you like her?" he insisted.

"Why, I like her—I like her better than she likes me."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that I will never suit her—no girl is good enough, no girl knows enough or has the right characteristics—the mind suited well enough to marry your mother's son."

"Why, Gabrielle, how you talk!" he cried.

"I mean what I say. Your mother is lovely to you, to anybody who does not invade her life and yours as she fears I am about to do."

"Nonsense, sweetheart, mother thinks well of you. From all this I take it, you would not like to live with her then."

"Not if we could do any other way," I said. "I'd rather have just two rooms and be by ourselves than a whole house like yours,

where I could not be myself and meet my own problems in my own way."

"Well, dear, I settled that last night and I have come to take you to see the house that is to be our home. Come."

I was perfectly delighted, and we went to inspect the house Hugh had rented. You can see how much voice I had in its selection. I suppose I should have objected then and insisted it was too good, too expensive and made him cancel his lease. Hugh says in his story that apart from my sisters I am unable to make any decision and that I have shunted all this onto his shoulders. He fails, like many men fail, to recognize the difference between the desire to please the one we love and mental incapacity to make a choice. However, in the next breath he says his whole life—married life—has resolved itself into one choice—whether to submit to me or be a brute to his wife. Such lovely consistency! I have always submitted to him, just as about the first house, its furnishings, everything. So far I have submitted to his wishes in another matter so delicate and private I hesitate to mention it, but I will. All along I have wanted a baby and still want one. What do you suppose my husband said when we first talked it over? We have never mentioned it since.

"Children, Gabrielle?" he said. "I gave up going to Europe in order to be married. If we start in raising a family, I will never be able to go."

Do you blame me for tears? Do you wonder that I dislike to speak of these great privacies? So far I have given up what should be the greatest desire of a woman's heart—motherhood. I have laid all my sacrifice on the altar of my love for Hugh. You can see how much he appreciates it. Now I feel like saying, Very well, I shall do so no longer. The more you try to please some men the more you may try. The more you do for them the more they expect of you.

I sit at home day after day, often seeing no one, waiting on my husband's return. Sometimes I am alone all or half the night. Because I have sometimes resented being alone so much and was demonstrative of my affection I got on my husband's nerve. It seems he has longed for the cold uncompromising austerity of his mother, as the desert traveler longs for the bracing wind from snow-capped mountains.

He has no sympathy with the fact, that I am home all the time; that I need to have outside atmosphere. I need change, diversion and social life. He meets people all the day, and wants to come home and stay there while he may. Most of the time I have realized this, and gave way. I have longed for companionship and once proposed that my youngest sister might come and live with us.

"Gabrielle," he said, "have your sister if you must, but really we cannot afford to increase the expenses. Besides, I did not marry the whole family."

Thus the matter rested. I have lived alone, except for my husband, who sometimes eats and sleeps at home, but not regularly. It seems I am inclined to get ahead of my story, for I am about to relate for you the story of our wedding trip to Boston. We must take this journey, though it seemed a foolish expense. I told Hugh, I'd rather ride from my father's house to our new home and let it go at that. The house Hugh had rented was practically ready for us by our wedding day, for Hugh's capable mother had arranged all the furniture and fittings nearly. I was not in it. I had longed for the fun of selecting and placing the things, this here and that there, but Hugh and his mother feathered the home nest for me. Mother Stunt assured us everything would be finished and dinner ready for us the day we should return. So, with bag and baggage, with rice and old shoes flying after us, we were off for Boston.

V

They say, you will never really know a man until you are married to him. During that Boston trip I came to know Hugh Stunt better than I had before. He had insisted on this journey—he had planned it for years this way. It had been his mother's childhood home and to him Boston was a sort of Mecca to which he was duty bound to make a pilgrimage. She had filled his mind with reverent curiosity

about the city and he talked on the way about how we should visit Bunker Hill, the Old South Church, Longfellow's home, etc., and make side trips to the many shrines of American patriotism in that vicinity. We did. We wore ourselves out trailing the marks of the Historical Society. But it made Hugh happy or seemed to, and I would have walked my legs off to make him pleased.

As you may well assume, I had never traveled any and was a frightened little stranger to the ways of big hotels and dining car service. I could not read or understand the menu cards. Ashamed of my ignorance, I insisted that Hugh should order for us both, and I was always pleased with what he selected. I see from his story I made a mistake there. I should have made a critical selection. I should have returned by a well reprimanded waiter certain dishes not quite up to my liking and caused the chef to know of my presence—the whole hotel management to realize that the roof covered at that moment a real American epicure, viz: Gabrielle Stunt, newlywed!

At this distance from that week or more of our honeymoon trip I can safely say I was infatuated with my husband and I am sure he was with me. It was the passionate physical climax of our year of courtship. We were drunk on love. I cannot deal with all the sacred details of those days—I cannot lay bare what would show the intensity of my husband's feelings for me, and how intense pas-

sion was followed by what seemed like fits of revulsion.

I could not understand. I knew nothing of men. Why I was the sweetest thing on earth one moment and not worth speaking to the next, I could not make out. What ailed my husband? I think now he had several "brain storms" on that trip. One day for example, we went to the beach, Nahant I think it was, and presently we found ourselves out on the white sands alone. My husband sat there, looking as glum as an owl, for an hour or more without saying a word. I always appreciate people who have that saving sense of humor—people who can find something bright in every situation, no matter how dark it may seem. My Hugh seems to be lacking in the bump of humor.

I let him sit there a long time saying nothing, just looking at him, to see how long he would keep it up. Finally I insisted on knowing what was the matter with him. He blamed his pettish conduct on the want of sleep. I know it now, but I did not then—my husband was suffering from the reaction of having all that I was, mentally and physically.

It seems to me now as I look back over the years I have been a wife, that someone must have understood men very well when the laws of the monogamous marriage system were established. The psychology of sex is such, that the satiated husband is quite a different individual from the eager and expectant lover,

whose every thought is to find favor. One would have thought my husband as a doctor, would have known all this, and instead of playing the part of a sulky child, he could have taught me—well, instead of condemning me for my loving ignorance.

It seemed strange to me why a husband could not relax and be natural. Why he could not sleep in the presence of his wife. Hugh acted so strangely I was frightened. I thought of a thousand foolish things. I even caught myself wondering if I had been such a disappointment to him that he had thoughts of suicide. I dared not leave him. Remember I was young, inexperienced and—desperately in love.

That evening after dinner we were in our room.

"Oh, do go away and amuse yourself. I must sleep," he blurted at me.

"What shall I do?" I asked.

"Do? For God's sake, do anything you like, just so you let me get some rest," and he paced about the room as if distracted.

What do you think of all this for conduct of a new husband, ten years the senior of his young wife? Are any of the charges he makes against me other than the mistake of loving intensely and due to a young girl's ignorance of men and the world? My husband engaged the room next ours and went to bed. I, the wife of less than a week, was banished. The first two or three nights of our wedded life,

my husband could not be content unless his arm was a pillow for my head. In less than a week he had to have a separate room.

That night I cried myself to sleep.

The truth of the matter is I married a neurotic, but I did not know it then. I was romantic and dramatic. If my husband did not want me I would go home. I awoke in the early hours of the morning and thought I would dress and pack my things and return home alone. I crept to the door between the rooms and tried the lock. It opened and peeping through I saw my husband sleeping sweetly. All my resolution vanished. I could not leave him. May be he was sick, though I believed it temper. I went in and sat down on the foot of his bed. The stir I made woke him.

"What are you doing here?" he roared at me, as if I had been a burglar going through his trousers for his coin.

I meant to tell him I was going home, but instead I begged him not to drive me away. I should have been strong—I was weak. I cried again. Suddenly he grabbed me and pulled me into the bed with him, calling me his sweetheart wife, begging my forgiveness and so on till the morning sun brightened our windows and chased away the cloud of young newlyweds' first quarrel.

I am wiser now, though Hugh don't seem to know it. What I should have done is this: I should have played off. When hubby wanted to be left alone, I should have put on my best

hat and frock, along with my prettiest smile and walked the hotel lobby, the parlors, the conservatory. I should have met other people, other couples, other men. I should have said, "Hugh dear, you need sleep this afternoon, or this evening, so I am going for a walk in the Common. I may do the Gardens, and out to Copley Square and back. Just you be easy. I'll amuse myself."

Girls, take my experience as a lesson. Don't let your husbands imagine you think they are gods. Men like "clinging vines" all right but not as a steady diet. Men want most the love they haven't got. They are very solicitous about what they are not sure of. Don't let them get too cock-sure of you. It palls on them.

At twenty-nine I am going to change, on occasions, from being a "clinging vine" and be a bramble bush. Men need a few scratches it seems to teach them to appreciate.

We came home from Boston to find our new home all ready and waiting. Our mothers had joined hands to complete the details and we sat down to our first meal with perfect appointments.

Then we began to live.

VI.

I had my next big lesson in neurotic husbands the day after we got home. Being anxious to please and to prepare just what would suit Hugh's taste best, I 'phoned to him to know

what he would like for dinner. I was even then a good cook and to have nice dinners was something I should take great pride in. I had heard the way to a man's heart is through his stomach, and I knew good cooking was an important essential in successful marriage.

I have learned since then, men will say things, both to their wives and to others, over the telephone, that they would not say face to face. As a promoter of rudeness and ill manners the telephone is a great success. What do you suppose my husband said when I 'phoned to know what he wanted for dinner?

"Get whatever you damn please and don't bother me about it," he shouted angrily.

Foolishly I went at once to the office and had it out with him. What I should have done is this: I should have said, "All right Mr. Hugh, I'll do just that and if it don't suit you, see to it that you say nothing."

He made such an ado about being bothered to tell what he liked that I tried getting things myself. Sometimes he was pleased; often not. When anything pleased him he had nothing to say, but he did not hesitate to express his displeasure when things did not suit him. When everything was just right, nothing said—taken as a matter of course. Silence was the only praise I got. The least detail at fault and I heard about it in good strong terms.

Often I would fix up something especially nice, thinking, "Hugh will like this and compliment me on it." When he came home, he

gobbled it down without a word. I wondered if all men were so heartless.

Day by day, I worked away, alone from morning till night and often when calls demanded, all or half the night I waited on his return. After dinner he would go to his "den" for an hour or two, then to bed. Still when I wanted his company what little time he was at home, I became a nuisance. So I put a crimp on the den business. I moved in myself.

When in the course of time the bills for meats especially seemed to run too high and Hugh said we must be more economical, I said, "Very well, you will just order what you want and I will cook it. I seem to be just a cook about here anyway."

When a month or so later, I pointed out to him that his bills were running higher than mine had, what do you suppose he said?

"By George, this high cost of living is getting fierce, isn't it?"

Not a word of apology or suggestion that I had done or was doing well. Not a word of admission that he was not as careful a buyer as I had been. I do not believe there ever was a particle of room in Hugh's head for a word of self-reproach.

My whole life has come to be regulated by the question mark of dollars. I dare not breathe without considering the cost. If my sisters visit me, I am afraid Hugh will begrudge what they eat. If I went ahead and did things socially or otherwise, I was called into account

because of the expense incurred. Now I am held up to the disapproval of the whole world because I am a "clinging vine." It is a beautiful lesson, a perfect clinical study of hysteria.

I have made my sacrifices, but I have not boasted of them. I have loved to excess and that is my great error. I have come to the point where I can appreciate the philosophy of the Stoic, who holds it unwise to have any very vital affections. I should have kept myself in the attitude of indifference—quiet, sane indifference. I should have said to my Hugh, "Now go along your own way. When you want to be alone I will find other company. Study your cases, chase your career; it does not interest me."

To such men as my husband, happiness from day to day is nothing. They do not live now and here. The lesson of the hour is lost. It is fame, fortune or some hoped for future, often not to be attained, that absorbs all their minds. It is not what they have that makes them happy; it is the struggle for what they have not.

Gabrielle was earnestly courted. Hours and hours spent in seeking her, but once married, she is put in a home and forgotten, except at meal time or when needed to satisfy that great demand of men's nature, other than for food or shelter—the demands of sex.

Gabrielle wants happiness now from day to day, and because she does, she is totally lacking in the conception of her husband's studi-

ous nature and the demands of his profession. She wants a real home and wants to hear the music of children's voices in it, but she is forbidden because her husband wants sometime or other, to take a post graduate course in Europe. She wants to receive and be received by many friends and neighbors but her husband forbids, because he wants to stay at home and to be quiet, to study, to pore over big books of science.

Hugh lacks a proper conception of his wife's hunger for happiness and her social needs.

VII.

Almost anyone at all skilled in the use of platitudes can write a high sounding essay on the economic aspects of marriage. It is unsafe to draw conclusions from any experience too closely associated with our own lives. We cannot get away from our own prejudices. It would not be fair for me to judge all men by the few samples with whom I have been closely associated—my father or my Hugh for instance. It would not be fair for men to judge all women by the few samples each had happened to run across. A few deductions may be safely made however, I firmly believe, and I will make them as bravely as I can.

A doctor who is obliged to make his living and his saving for the rainy day, from the daily grind of general practice, should not be dreaming of research work, great scientific discoveries and professional fame. He must keep busy

curing the stomach aches, coughs and other little mean everyday human ills that make up the bulk of all professional activity. Also he must be just as keen to collect his bills and keep his credit good as he is to treat the sick successfully. If he has an incurable desire to do research work, and has recognized ability as an original research worker, he should connect himself with an institution where such skill is needed and paid for.

My Hugh has failed, though he says he is made of this stuff researchers must have in them—failed because he has spent all his energy trying to live his wife's life for her. I have shown you how he has lived my life. I have told you the God's truth, sparing neither of us. What could have hindered a strong man from attaining his ends in spite of anything? It all depends upon his attitude. My husband expected the world to come seeking him; he seemed to wait on being discovered. He thinks he should be recognized as "my father's son." Success does not seek us—we must chase after it, run after it and grasp it. Dr. Sam Smith does things. Dr. Hugh Stunt waits. To get on the surgical staff Dr. Sam courted and cultivated the people he needed, the men and women of the official boards. He got the tools he needed and somehow learned to use them. He pushed his way in. Dr. Hugh would not do this. It was beneath his dignity. He waited for the committees to come begging him—kneeling to him—and he has waited in

vain. Now he tells us Gabrielle is to blame because he is not recognized.

I have tried to get him out among people. I tried to keep the social standing we needed, and he says we wasted hundreds of evenings. This he calls balderdash and rot. The long and short of it is, Dr. Sam could deliver the goods and Dr. Hugh could not. One has initiative and self-reliance; the other is a victim of brain fag and flabby nerves. One can dig things out for himself; the other must be taught by rote and by rule. One is a natural mechanic, and has well trained muscles; the other could not make a chicken coop or scarcely drive a nail.

I am not discrediting Dr. Sam's wife; she has carried her end but Sam would have done just as well had he married me, and I am sure Mrs. Sam would not have done any better than I have, had she married my Hugh with the responsibility of his making on her hands. Doctors are not good diagnosticians of their own cases, and Dr. Hugh has failed in his diagnosis. It is a case of hypertrophy of the ego!

Dr. Sam little realized, when he so gallantly credited all his success to his wife, what a thrust he was giving me. Dr. Hugh was itching to find some excuse for himself and how eagerly he clutched it. What made the difference? Ha! the wife! Eureka! and with the cry of Archimedes on his lips, he would have run home naked I suppose, had he been at the bath as was the Greek, for he had found the cause of his failure!

It happens that I am more or less confidential with Mrs. Dr. Sam, or she is with me. She tells me she just had to look after Dr. Sam's ties, clothes, etc., for he is so careless about his personal appearance, that she feared he would discredit himself. She envies me, she says, my husband of such careful personal habits as to dress and appearance.

So I could go on analyzing and comparing, but to what end? Could I illustrate even by contrast what is a successful marriage? Can I throw any more light on the economics of wedlock? Personally if Hugh thought so, I should say he had done fairly well. He has three times the average income of doctors in general; he is looked upon as a good doctor and his families stick to him as well as to any doctor. He carries all the life insurance he needs to carry. If he should die, I am sure I could manage very well. I have two trades—I am a good housekeeper and I can teach music. We have a beautiful home and have kept out of debt. It is easy to see so many much worse off than we are, that it does not discourage me to see the few who are better off.

Dr. Hugh has failed in some ways. He is dissatisfied with himself but he thinks he is finding fault with me. He is too egotistical to take the blame to himself. He is not the father of children; he does not respect his wife, though he admits he still loves me. He does

not hesitate to make what seems to me untruthful statements and criticisms.

It is never too late to mend—to change; our relationship is not fixed. If this amounts to an irreconcilable incompatibility, the relationship can be easily broken. Much as I love my husband, it cannot be forever a one-sided love. I will not be the drag that hinders this conscientious husband's professional ambitions. If these ambitions come before home, wife and well born children, then such a husband should not have these things that most men count most worthy. To such as have such ignoble promptings of ambition, there awaits a Waterloo, just as it awaited another who was besotted with ambition.

If Dr. Hugh Stunt or his like can find any comfort in my side of the story he and they are welcome to it. It is a fatal error to misinterpret a devoted love—it may be an error to show such a love. I have confessed my want of wisdom.

If my good intentions have paved the way to the hell of domestic tragedy, then I must bear my fate with what fortitude I may. It all belongs as I have said to the domain of the psychology of sex—the unsolved riddle of the human world.

If the test of love is sacrifice, I have stood that test.

If the anchor of love is appreciation, I may be drifting, for I do not believe I have been ap-

preciated thus far as some husbands would have appreciated me.

Anyway I feel better to have told you how I feel about it.

I wonder what Hugh will think when he reads this?

The Epilogue.

Some there were, from among the throng of travelers along Life's great Highway, who did pause to examine the burdens which their fellows bore. Though each one called his burden Experience, this examination revealed the diverse and varied character of their contents.

Some were gross and foul, throwing out the fetid odor—the stench of crime, disease and misspent lives. Others were of pain, sickness and sorrow caused by the mistakes of ignorance rather than intent. Others still, were of sacrifices, sorrows, anxieties, cares, and all that which is offered on the altar of Love.

Again there were some made up of disappointments and grief; memories of broken ties; little ones laid in untimely graves; lovers who were unfaithful; wives gone astray; husbands who forgot the holy vows; and indeed it seems that some one traveler or another carried with his burden of Experience all that was possible for the human race to suffer and endure or enjoy. For it is true not all these burdens were of grief and regret; indeed some were memories of great happiness.

But time is fleeting and sunshine soon passes away. The ways of life lead always toward the night. He is wise indeed who has oppor-

tunity to examine the Experience of others and thereby profit. Judgment seems to be the last development of the human soul and Experience is the only food that appears to nourish it. If in pausing—you and I—to examine the burdens laid bare in this little record, we add anything to our faculties of wise judgement our labor will not be in vain. It is better that we carry on our way to the end of the journey Experiences of joy rather than of sorrow. It is better to take the right road than the wrong. Here are a few guideboards that point out the roads we should not and need not take. If you have read them carefully, I pray Heaven speed you on your way with smiles and song—Peace is waiting to welcome you at

THE END.

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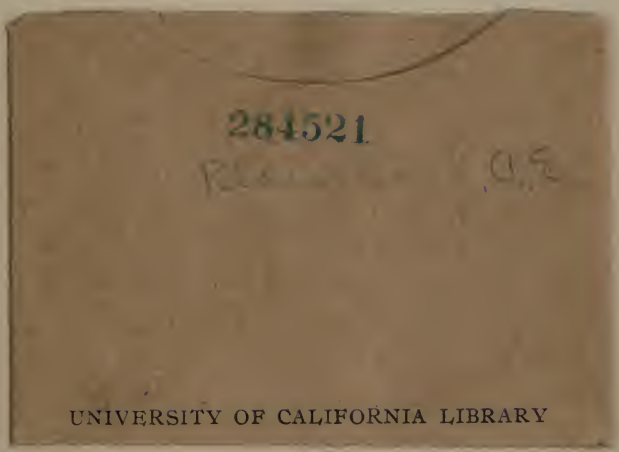
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